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**“A Field the Lord hath Blessed”**

**The Person, Works, Life and Polemical Ecclesiology  
of Richard Field, DD, 1561-1616**

Vernon Gregory Wilkins

A dissertation submitted to the University of Bristol in accordance with the requirements of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Faculty of Arts

Department of Theology and Religious Studies

December 2017



# Abstract

Richard Field, DD, 1561-1616, has been described in modern times as 'one of the most stupendously learned' amongst theologians of his age; in his own time he was hugely admired too, by King James, by protestant (and some Roman Catholic) academic theologians and by neighbours and family. He wrote one published work, *Of the Church, Five Bookes*, a substantial systematic ecclesiology of 700,000 words. He preached many sermons, but only one was ever printed. He was overlooked for preferment until too late. But attention to him in the scholarly world has been comparatively minimal. Until recently no major study has been made of him, although numerous scholars have mined his work piecemeal for quotations on various doctrines, or, occasionally, aspects of his ecclesiology. Only in this century has there appeared a substantial study prior to this one, and it also is devoted substantially to certain aspects of Field's doctrinal understanding rather than to his ecclesiology as a whole.

This study attempts to redress further this lack of attention to the ecclesiology of this largely forgotten divine. Field the scholar-churchman is introduced with a brief biography and assessment of his erudition, and then an examination of his worth in relation to two of his predecessors. Then the second section of the study analyses his one published sermon, and then his systematic ecclesiology. Particular attention is given to Field's protestant 'notes' of the church, defended in contrast to the notes of Cardinal Bellarmine, and to his conception of ministerial orders and bishops. Following this, in the third section of the study, Field is set in the context of his own time, analysing a sample of how Field was received in his own day, and latterly. The conclusion of the study is that Field is of substantial importance, and warrants continued study today.



# Dedication and Acknowledgements

I dedicate this study to the memory of my late parents,

**Eric and Evelyn Wilkins**

I owe them a huge debt of gratitude for their constant self-sacrifice, care and encouragement throughout my life, without which I would never have achieved this goal.

I acknowledge with many thanks the following people, knowing that this project would not have reached its conclusion without their friendship, practical support, patience, advice and encouragement:

My supervisor, **Dr Jon Balserak**,  
my brothers, **Dr Adrian Wilkins and Dr Barry Wilkins, MD**,  
**Andy and Mary Avery**,  
**Peter and Juliette Wood**,  
**Peter and Bridget Tizzard**,  
**Ian and Tess Garrett**,  
the **Graduate School** and the **Department of Theology  
and Religious Studies of the University of Bristol**



## Author's Declaration

I declare that the work in this dissertation was carried out in accordance with the requirements of the University's Regulations and Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes and that it has not been submitted for any other academic award. Except where indicated by specific reference in the text, the work is the candidate's own work. Work done in collaboration with, or with the assistance of, others, is indicated as such. Any views expressed in the dissertation are those of the author.

DATE: 30 December 2017





# **‘A Field the Lord hath Blessed’<sup>1</sup>**

## **The Person, Works, Life and Polemical Ecclesiology of Richard Field, DD, 1561-1616**

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<sup>1</sup> The seventeenth century historian Thomas Fuller described Field thus, punning the title of this thesis – see 3.1 for reference.



# **‘A Field the Lord hath Blessed’**

## **Section 1. Chapters 1-4: Who is Field?**

**Section 1** of this study introduces Field, in preparation for an assessment of his writings in section 2.

First, in **Chapter 1**, I introduce Field for the benefit of the reader who has not encountered him before. Brief biographical details are accompanied by something of the esteem in which Field was held, a statement of some of his distinctives, and a summary of his written output and a brief literature review. We meet Field the eirenical polemicist, stridently opposing the programme of Rome, whilst seeking to build bridges with the churches of the East and the other protestant churches of Europe.

**Chapter 2** assesses the various biographies of Field, showing that only two are substantially original, but I analyse one unique copy which has manuscript annotations.

**Chapter 3** continues to examine Field the scholar, demonstrating the evidence for his notable erudition and esteem, arguing that he is consequently worthy of renewed consideration.

**Chapter 4** concludes **Section 1**, preparing the ground for consideration of Field’s writings, but taking a sample of two of Field’s predecessors, namely Jewel and Hooker, arguing that notwithstanding the eminence of these scholars, Field, both complementing and supplementing their output, cannot be discarded in their favour.

## Chapter 1

### – Field the Scholar-Churchman –

#### 1.1 Introduction to this study

He was born October 15. A. Dom. 1561, in the Parish of Hemsted in the Countie of Hartford, about 6 Miles from St. Albans, of a Familie Ancient, and of good Repute and Esteem in the Countrie [. . .]. His Father finding him to be of more than ordinarie Parts, bred him up a Schollar.<sup>1</sup>

Richard Field was ‘one of the most stupendously learned of Anglican theologians in an age when Anglican clerical scholarship was [becoming] the wonder of the world’ – so writes Paul Avis in his *Anglicanism and the Christian Church*,<sup>2</sup> alluding to an aphorism of Joseph Hall,<sup>3</sup> of Richard Field, DD, 1561-1616, divinity lecturer at Lincoln’s Inn (1594-96), rector of Burghclere (from 1594), chaplain to their majesties Elizabeth I (from 1598) and James I, and latterly also prebend of Windsor (from 1604), fellow of the intended (but never flourishing) Chelsea College (from 1609), and dean of Gloucester (from 1610). He died suddenly in 1616 with a ‘promise of the Byshopricke of Oxford’ unfulfilled.<sup>4</sup> Hall’s favourable acclamation is by no means unique. In the seventeenth century the historian Thomas Fuller punned the title of this thesis.<sup>5</sup> In the twentieth century Patrick Collinson described Field as ‘ineffably learned’.<sup>6</sup> James I’s accolade and many others will be noted in due course.

The ‘Familie Ancient [. . .] of good Repute and Esteem’ (of present-day Leverstock Green in the parish of Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire) in the quotation above was of relatively humble stock.<sup>7</sup>

Nonetheless, Field was educated well at Berkhamsted School, then at Oxford University, entering Magdalen Hall c.1577,<sup>8</sup> where he excelled as a scholar, graduating BA through to BD at Magdalen

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<sup>1</sup> Field’s son Nathaniel Field writing in his *Some Short Memorials Concerning the Life of the Reverend Divine Doctor Richard Field*, ed. by John Le Nève (London: 1717), hereafter *Memorials*, 1-2. ‘Hemsted’ is today’s Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire, UK.

<sup>2</sup> Paul Avis, *Anglicanism and the Christian Church*, 1<sup>st</sup> edn (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1989), 68. The word ‘becoming’ is added by Avis in the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of this work (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2002), 51.

<sup>3</sup> Avis here alludes to an aphorism (‘the wonder of the world’) from a sermon on 1 Corinthians 12:4 preached by Joseph Hall, DD, at St Paul’s Church in London on February 20<sup>th</sup> 1623. This will be noted later.

<sup>4</sup> *Memorials*, 16. The promise was made by the king via the hand of George Villiers, future Duke of Buckingham, in a letter dated 11 July 1616.

<sup>5</sup> ‘A Field the Lord hath Blessed’. See shortly below, and cited at section 3.1.

<sup>6</sup> Patrick Collinson, *The Religion of Protestants* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), 60.

<sup>7</sup> Field’s father and grandfather are referred to in chapters 2 and 3.

<sup>8</sup> I argue for Magdalen Hall rather than Magdalen College in the next chapter.

Hall, then DD from Queen's College in 1596. He married Elizabeth Harris, daughter of Richard Harris, rector of Hardwicke, in 1594,<sup>9</sup> and then after her death he married Dorothy Spenser, widow of John Spenser shortly before his own sudden death in 1616.

Early in James I's reign Field attended the Hampton Court Conference (January 1604), but very little is known of his contribution there, or whom he was supporting (if any side – accounts disagree), or even why he was asked to attend, save that the king summoned him. In the various accounts of the conference, Field is said, apparently contradictorily, to have 'gone in with' the puritans,<sup>10</sup> and to have 'spoken altogether against them'. I shall not interact with this biographical detail more than minimally in this study. Further biographical data will emerge in the course of this study, especially in the next chapter.

Of definitive importance are Field's published works – one sermon (but only one, contrasting with a plethora from other divines of the era), printed in 1604 as *A Learned Sermon preached before the King* (on the occasion of King James' coronation celebrations); and his magisterial *Of the Church, Five Bookes* (900 pages in the 1628/35 editions).<sup>11</sup> With his eye permanently on the need, as he saw it, to defend the Church of England of the Elizabethan settlement against the charge of Rome that she was no church at all, Field takes the reader through a meticulous and systematic 'Definition of the

<sup>9</sup> *Memorials*, 6. In this era a minister had to receive permission to marry, known as a 'Certificate for Minister's Wife'. Field's, dated 18 March 1593 (i.e., 1593/94), reads, touchingly: '[...] Whereas Mr Richard Feilde of Winchester Bachelour of divinitie is desirous to contracte matrimonie with Elizabeth Harris of Hardweeke within this shire, we [...] doe give testimonie unto your good L: [Lordship; i.e., the bishop] by these presents that y<sup>e</sup> saide Elizabeth Harris is and hath been ever accompted a modeste maide sober and discrete of her behaviour, descended of honeste Parents & brought up by them in the feare of God & trewe religion [...]' (Lincolnshire Archives, DIOC/CER W/3, Folio 4). The reference to Winchester provides evidence that Field was indeed the divinity lecturer there (see chapter 2).

<sup>10</sup> The term 'puritan' is notoriously difficult to define satisfactorily, not only because different people, then and now, used and use it differently, and thus confusingly, but also because puritanism evolved greatly during the more than a century between the Elizabethan and the Restoration eras. This study will contentedly employ the term 'puritan', again usually with lower-case 'p', but in a conveniently imprecise manner. Originally 'puritan', and synonyms 'the godly' and 'precisian', were terms of opprobrium, sometimes abuse, coined within conformist Anglicanism. I use the terms, and the very similar but not identical term 'non-conformist', without prejudice to their pejorative origin, albeit acknowledging that these are ill-defined terms, representing a wide spectrum of members of the Church of England, some of presbyterian or even separatist tendency, others with a milder desire to advance the Reformation beyond that of the Elizabethan settlement but with no current desire to leave the Church of England. Many such puritans remained contented Anglicans. A puritan identifiable as such would either be practising non-conformity to some extent, in rejecting certain rituals or practices, or in arguing for change, particularly, in the case of many proto-presbyterians, arguing against bishops and for the 'new discipline' of rule by church elders; all puritans emphasised the importance of godly living. But 'separatists' are those who not only formally reject the right of bishops to rule the church, but set out (or strongly desire) to form independent congregations. Any use of the loosely defined terms here does not imply any particular place on the spectrum of usages, context supplying this in each case.

<sup>11</sup> Richard Field, DD, *Of the Church, Five Bookes*, actually five books and two appendices, totalling over 700,000 words. Books 1-4 with appendix to Book 3 (Oxford: 1606), reprinted 1614 correcting many printing errors in the 1606 edition; Book 5 with appendix to the whole work, (Oxford: 1610); 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of whole work, with additions to Book 3 and to the appendix to Book 3 (Oxford: 1628); 3<sup>rd</sup> edition (Oxford: 1635); edition ed. by John Sherren Brewer, Books 1-3 only in one volume, 1843; Ecclesiastical History Society edition in four volumes (Cambridge: 1847-52), styling itself 'The Third Edition'. The EHS edition runs to over 2,000 pages in total; the Victorian editions modernised the spelling, typeface and layout, and extensively updated and supplemented the references to the quotations Field cites in his footnotes. Also Richard Field, DD, *A Learned Sermon Preached before the King at Whitehall, on Friday the 16 of March [1604]* (London: 1604).

Church' (Book 1), the 'Notes of the Church' (Book 2), the locus of the 'True Church' (Book 3), the 'Privileges of the Church' (Book 4), and the 'Government of the Church' (Book 5), together with two appendices. It would be impossible for this study to cover the entire breadth of all of Field's concerns, for to attempt to do so would result in either inordinate length, or a broad but superficial, shallow result. I restrict myself to Field's doctrines of the church (at length), and of scripture as definitive for true Christianity and for the true church.

We shall see emerging in the course of this study a number of features of Field's writing which between them define Field's methodology. I shall note Field's eirenicism towards every manifestation of the church in Christendom which satisfies his conditions for a church being worthy to be named as such; these are that the said 'church' be not in damnable schism, nor in damnable heresy. Field's 'target', the papal faction (as Field terms it) of the Church of Rome, he finds to be in both. Field's generosity towards all other churches includes the entire gamut of churches of the East, and includes (arguably fascinatingly) the pre-Reformation Church of Rome in consideration of its deceived and captive majority membership, but certainly excluding the papal 'faction'. Thus I shall note also Field's implacable, strident polemicism against Tridentine Rome. But that the historic Church of Rome, minus its 'papal faction', was not only a true church, but, essentially, a protestant one, is one of Field's distinctive contributions to ecclesiology. Another such is Field's insistence, not only that all the churches of the East were true churches, but that their differences, though serious, were nonetheless not in the category of damnable schism or heresy. And a third distinctive feature is Field's view that differences between the protestant churches could be resolved, not simply by peace-making initiatives, but by rightly understanding one another,<sup>12</sup> by which process the differences would dissolve away. Another feature of Field's methodology that we shall note is his perfectionist, perhaps even pedantic (sometimes exasperatingly so), argumentation: always from first principles, always detailed to the n-th degree, always scrupulously defended, always meticulously categorised, very much after Aristotle's methodical heart. He would, I suggest, have made an excellent mathematician, and first demonstrated his academic prowess in the study of logic and philosophy in his undergraduate years, and his lectures therein afterwards. We know that he did indeed show exceptional talent early in his career, not least in his skill in disputation in the Oxford schools.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup> See, e.g., (3.1/i.151): 'by the merciful goodness of God all these different sort of Christians, though distracted and dissevered, by reason of diversity of ceremonies and outward observations, different manner of delivering certain points of faith, mistaking one another, or variety in opinion touching things not fundamental, do yet agree in one substance of faith, and are so far forth orthodox, that they retain a saving profession of all divine verities absolutely necessary to salvation, and are all members of the true Catholic Church of Christ'; or (5.15/iii.77): 'Much contention there hath been between them and other, [. . .] but I verily think, it hath been in a great part upon mistaking, and because they understood not one another'.

<sup>13</sup> I shall demonstrate this from the early testimony of John Frith in Chapter 2, *Field's Biographies*, below.

I shall argue in this study that these characteristics of Field are sufficiently exceptional for us to consider him to be a figure of real importance, deserving enhanced employment in modern scholarship, on account of his superior erudition (warranting the accolades ‘ineffably learned’ and ‘stupendously learned’ quoted above), possessing as he undoubtedly did an astonishing memory and command of 1,500 years of theological debate; on account of distinctive originality (such as his belief in the theoretical possibility of reconciling protestant factions as far apart as Lutheranism and Calvinistic protestantism); and on account of his highly pedantic and systematic analysis of arguments, exhausting in its detail. Not, though, on account of his influence, either in his own day or subsequently – for his evident retiring nature, preferring the company of family and chapter in his preferred homes of the Burghclere parish or Windsor Close rather than court life or ecclesiastical prominence, rendered his influence relatively minimal. That this needs rectifying by renewed interest and scholarship today is the contention of this study.

It should be noted that these marked characteristics of Field have long been recognised, though not extensively. His erudition, for example, was acclaimed by some in the seventeenth century, by scholars such as Joseph Hall, Thomas Fuller and John White, as well as by Paul Avis<sup>14</sup> today and Richard Hooper in his late nineteenth century *DNB* article on Field. Hooper noted some of Field’s distinctives, such as his pioneering belief in the essential protestantism of the historic Latin church when notionally severed from its papal faction. I, together with other modern writers who have noticed Field substantially, such as Avis, Milton, Dawn and Jones-Davies,<sup>15</sup> am far from the first to have discovered Field. Nonetheless, it is noteworthy, and an enigma, that Field, despite his obvious academic prowess, has received relatively little attention in the academic world for 400 years. True, there were a number, but not a large number, of scholars in all theological camps in the seventeenth century who quoted Field, often with favour, sometimes disfavour, the various camps either claiming Field for their own theological position or opposing his. The nineteenth century saw a limited revival of favour for Field, as we shall see later,<sup>16</sup> and the late twentieth century likewise to a relatively small extent, principally by Avis, Milton, Dawn and Jones-Davies.<sup>17</sup>

Like his close contemporary Richard Hooker, Field developed what I intend to argue was an immensely significant apologetic for the Church of England in the late-Elizabethan and (in Field’s case) early-Jacobean eras. Whereas Hooker’s prime concern was to counter the schismatic tendency (as he saw it) of the nonconformists, Field’s concern was to counter the error (as he saw it) of papal Rome. This distinction is important for us to note. It makes a direct comparison between the two

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<sup>14</sup> Hall and Avis were cited above; Fuller and White will be mentioned below (e.g. at section 3.1).

<sup>15</sup> These will all receive treatment in this study.

<sup>16</sup> See sections 1.4 and 11.1 below.

<sup>17</sup> See sections 5.14 and 11.2-4 below.



works difficult to some degree, because their ultimate purposes are different. Certainly each can be mined for doctrinal formulations, and a due comparison made at that level, as Dawn does in his doctoral thesis. So, for example, both Field and Hooker defend episcopal government, but ultimately for different fundamental reasons: Hooker against schismatic presbyterianism, Field against tyrannical Rome. Hooker's purpose was largely defined by his uncomfortable debate with Travers at the Temple, Field's by his renowned disputations against Bellarmine at Oxford (as we shall see). It would be a mistake to define either in terms of the sum of their doctrinal views, for it is a higher defining cause which for each provides the aetiology for their writing. Writing of Field, Dawn states that '*Of the Church* is a book of doctrine'.<sup>18</sup> At one level this cannot be gainsaid, and I am sympathetic, because on reading Field one discovers that he is fully 'thought through' in every doctrinal issue, and defends his every such view with profound cogency. Select any Christian doctrine, and a study could be made of Field's view of it. Yet at another level I do not consider Dawn's statement to be an adequate summary of Field's intention. Not least, Field himself says that writing yet another book of doctrine is definitely not his concern; he certainly agrees that delineation of doctrine is vital ('all wise and judicious men do more esteem books of doctrinal principles'), yet 'I resolved to communicate to others [...] the nature of the church'.<sup>19</sup> *Of the Church* is thus not a systematic theology as such, only to be mined for Field's stance on various doctrinal issues; it is a systematic ecclesiology. But in fact it is not even this alone, because an ulterior motive drives it, namely his polemicism against Rome. Any student of Field needs to bear this in mind continuously. This study will interact with Hooker in chapter 4, but not greatly owing to their different targets. The Roman Catholics<sup>20</sup> certainly knew they had been attacked by Field – some of them wrote furiously against Field's work, and his response to these produces nearly twenty percent of his total output.

<sup>18</sup> Russell P. Dawn, *Predestination and the Lord's Supper in the Polemical Ecclesiology of Richard Field (1561-1616)* (Oxford University Doctoral Thesis, 2011), §1.2.

<sup>19</sup> (ED/I.xx-xxi).

<sup>20</sup> I shall endeavour to employ the term 'Roman Catholic' in this study as the preferred referent, even though it was not yet a common term in Field's time. The Church of Rome of the day considered itself to be *the* Catholic Church, avowing no other, so they thought of themselves as being the 'Catholics'. Protestants would not refer to Roman Catholics as 'Catholics', for they had a very different understanding of what it was to be catholic. Typically, Protestants when relating to Roman Catholics or when opposing Rome would use terms such as 'Romanism', 'Romanist', 'recusancy' or 'recusant'; more opprobriously, many would use terms such as 'papism', 'papal faction' or 'papist', or the 'prevailing faction' of Rome, when they had in mind not the entire Church of Rome, but the 'faction' of the pope and his spokesmen. This study, not without discomfort, acknowledges that these terms were frequently used, not least by Field himself, in a highly pejorative manner. Field was far from alone in this, of course – for over half a century certain protestants in England had employed such vehicles of disdain, 'papist' being a favourite term of, not least, King Edward VI. Nonetheless, where this study does use these terms, when referring to the very frequent use of them by Field or any other churchman or theologian of his day, it does so without prejudice, and disavows any opprobrium. Field himself uses these terms to refer to his opponents, the representatives, spokesmen and advocates of the Church of Rome, who upheld its status without any desire or will for reform, both in its Tridentine and pre-Reformation manifestations. In the latter case, the 'papal faction' in Field's thinking certainly did not include its esteemed churchmen and theologians where these were longing for and calling for reform, albeit not without fault (as Field sees it) for their failure to see much error.

## 1.2 The True Church in England – The Church of Rome in England, or the Reformed Church of England?

It was arguably a masterstroke of Field's sometimes highly polemical argument prominently to demonstrate two things. The first was his decided opinion that the reformed, protestant Church of England after the Elizabethan settlement was the true catholic continuation in England of the historic Latin Church. The second was that the Latin Church itself had always been, fundamentally, a true protestant church, in the sense that in every age it contained adherents of every essential protestant doctrine, albeit with none of those advocates holding to the totality of protestant doctrine, and all being in some way 'tainted' by much of the corpus of Romanism. By way of example he lauds the likes of Gerson,<sup>21</sup> Cassander,<sup>22</sup> and the renowned polymath bishop of Lincoln, Robert Grosseteste,<sup>23</sup> and countless others, for their campaigning, reforming stance. Further, the latter-day popes and their followers and spokesmen were but a schismatic and heretical 'faction only in the Churches', albeit 'the prevailing faction',<sup>24</sup> whose erroneous beliefs and corrupt practices, as Field saw them to be, had never been upheld by the greater part of the church Fathers and schoolmen. It was the Church of England, he insisted, and not the late-medieval Church of Rome which 'adhered to the Catholic verity',<sup>25</sup> and was thus the true apostolic church. Thus much of Field's work argues, at times

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<sup>21</sup> Jean Charlier de Gerson, 1363-1429, Chancellor of the University of Paris, prominent at the Council of Constance (Field holds him *not* responsible for the condemnation of Hus), friend of Pierre d'Ailly.

<sup>22</sup> George Cassander, 1513-1566, Flemish theologian, advocate for composing the breach between Rome and the protestant church, attacked by both sides, entered on the Index in 1617 after the publication of his collected works.

<sup>23</sup> Robert Grosseteste, c.1175-1253, bishop of Lincoln (1235), polymath, a reformer protesting against papal abuses. Also known as Grosthead and other variant spellings.

<sup>24</sup> (3.8/l.171).

<sup>25</sup> (3.39/l.325).

with considerable disdain,<sup>26</sup> against the writings of various papist<sup>27</sup> advocates such as Bellarmine<sup>28</sup> and Stapleton.<sup>29</sup> The *DNB* mentions a number of Field's contemporaries and predecessors writing against Stapleton, but Field is not amongst them.<sup>30</sup> Field states his conviction that these two contemporary Romanist writers together represent all the objections of any substance, both to

<sup>26</sup> Field's writing can be quite polemical, and he can be very scornful of his adversaries' reasoning and of their unjustified claims against Field and his fellows, sometimes with biting sarcasm. Phraseology in the like of the following abounds: 'See then, if he be not forced to run round in a circle' (4.7/II.413), 'surely it seemeth, his brain was much crazed when he thus wrote, saying, unsaying, and saying he knew not what' (4.6/II.410), 'doth but more and more shew the distemper of his head' (4.6/II.411), 'our adversaries so tediously contend and jangle' (2.1/I.62), 'sophistical cavillation' (2.4/I.77), 'what could be more frivolously spoken?' (1.15/I.49), 'wicked calumniation' (ED/I.xxii).

<sup>27</sup> Field's frequent employment of the terms 'papist', 'Romanist' and 'papal faction' is reflected in this study because it is Field's employment of them that is in consideration, not an arguably more generous assessment today. By 'papal faction' Field denotes that subset of members of the Church of Rome whom he considers to hold and advocate Rome's heretical views (or to have done so in previous ages). The terms 'papist' and 'Romanist' seem to be virtually synonymous in Field's usage. If they are nuanced differently at all, then we might say that 'papist' conveys the notion that the person or matter being considered is following the pope(s) and papal faction as Field conceives this (i.e., the faction which in his view has led and seduced the greater proportion of members of the Church of Rome, contrary to the exertions of various historical reforming factions and individuals); if 'Romanist' has a distinctive nuance then we might say it indicates 'one of our self-avowed opponents in the Church of Rome' as opposed to 'one of us in the Reformed Church of England'. But such a distinction is probably rather tenuous, and Field uses both terms more or less interchangeably as far as I can see. A Romanist or papist is certainly not in Field's usage simply a baptised member of the Church of Rome. Rather, he is a member who with knowledge, understanding, commitment, stridency and (what Field would call) pertinacity holds, advocates and propagates the heretical and schismatical opinions and corruptions (as Field holds them to be denials of true doctrine) that he is opposing; likewise the papal faction opposes and condemns any church outside of Rome, including the Church of England and the Eastern Churches (as Field conceives all this). What Field does not mean by 'papist' is 'papalist' as opposed to 'conciliarist', deferring to the debate within Romanism as to whether ultimate authority and infallibility rests in the pope or in councils (or in neither, but rather in Christ). Field is aware of various debates within Romanism, but his 'papist' basically means 'Romanist', as explained above. Nor does Field mean 'papist' as opposed to any reforming faction within Romanism, such as the 'Hussite' faction or the ministrations of Jean Gerson. The papal faction, therefore, is to be distinguished from the mass of common Roman Catholic believers and practitioners, who, being untaught and thus lacking understanding, are passive, albeit devoted, followers of their religion; and likewise is to be distinguished from various reforming tendencies and advocates of right doctrine who have been active through the ages.

<sup>28</sup> Cardinal Robert Bellarmine, 1542-1621, canonised 1930, Italian Jesuit, Thomist, Tridentine Counter-Reformation dialectical controversialist. Works by Bellarmine relevant to this study include: *De Conciliis et Ecclesiae in Disputationes de controversiis Christianae fidei adversus huius temporis hereticos* (Ingolstadt: 1586-89, with later revisions and editions including at least two in Field's writing years); and *Apologia Bellarmini pro responsione sub ad librum Jacobi Magnae Britanniae Regis* (1609). King James I, Theodore Beza, John Reynolds and Thomas Hobbes all wrote against Bellarmine, as well as Field.

<sup>29</sup> Thomas Stapleton, DD (1571), 1535-1598, English theologian, Romanist controversialist, prolific author, self-exiled 1559 from Oxford after the death of Queen Mary, to Leuven, then Paris, then Douay where he taught at the English College from its founding.

Works of Stapleton relevant to our study are:

A translation from the Latin of Staphylus, Frederic, *Apologie, intreating of the true and right understanding of holy Scripture* (Antwerp: 1565), to which is appended *Discours of the Translatour upon the doctrine of the protestants, which he trieth by the three first founders and fathers thereof, Martin Luther, Philip Melancthon, and especially John Calvin*;

*A Fortresse of the Faith first planted amonge us englishmen, and continued hitherto in the universall Church of Christ. The faith of which time Protestants call Papistry* (Antwerp: 1565);

*A returne of untruthes upon M. Jewels Replie* (Antwerp: 1566);

*Autoritatis Ecclesiasticae circa S. Scripturarum approbationem [...] Defensio [...] contra Disputationem de Scriptura Sacra G. Whitakeri* (Antwerp: 1592); and

*Apologia [...] contra varias et falsas accusationes Elizabethae Angliae reginae [...]* (Constance: 1592).

<sup>30</sup> Amongst Stapleton's detractors, according to the *DNB*, were Dr William Fulke, Dr William Whitaker (against whom Stapleton wrote *Autoritatis Ecclesiasticae [...]*), Dr John Reynolds, John Jewell, and Dr John Bridges, bishop of Oxford.

protestantism in general and to the Church of England in particular, of the entire Romanist 'side'.<sup>31</sup> Further, Field draws heavily, and with much approval, on the writings of the early Church Fathers and many scholastic theologians of the historic Latin Church in every age – even Thomas Aquinas. Field embraces them to the extent that they support his own protestant cause – and he finds that many of them do so considerably.

Unlike Richard Hooker, Field is comparatively unknown in our present age, and arguably much neglected or forgotten. There is very little secondary literature which gives prominent attention to this Church of England divine,<sup>32</sup> and his single magisterial work, *Of the Church*, is not well known today, nor widely available in print.<sup>33</sup> Following Field's death, King James I confessed, 'I should have done more for that man'.<sup>34</sup> It would seem, then, that he was neglected to some extent in his own day, though he was much admired (as we shall see) – particularly for his preaching and his conversation; for his learning and his knowledge of the church Fathers and of the scholastic theologians through to his own day; and for his prodigious memory for everything he read.<sup>35</sup> James I evidently liked and respected Field.<sup>36</sup> He was summoned by the king to attend the Hampton Court conference on 14 January 1604, and at James' nomination he might have become bishop of Oxford had not his death intervened after a seizure, at the age of 55.

It is not the purpose of this study to produce a comprehensive biography of this late-Elizabethan / early-Jacobean divine. But there are certainly aspects of his biography, as per the writings of his early biographers (especially his son Nathaniel's), which testify to his contemporary reputation and scholarly aptitude. I suggest, for a number of reasons, that it is regrettable that Field's work is not currently in the scholarly domain to any considerable degree. First, in my judgement it can be reasonably demonstrated that Field's academic prowess was of renown in his day and perhaps should be still in ours – I myself believe this is so. We should not esteem him unchallengeable in his determinations on the various points of his polemical ecclesiology, but I will argue in this study that the contribution to scholarly debate that he made in his own day should not be ignored or dismissed

<sup>31</sup> 'Bellarmine and Stapleton have taken most pains in this argument, I will therefore propose the objections I find in them, assuring myself that there are not any other of moment, to be found in the writings of any other of that side' (2.2/1.66). Thus in Field's view these two Romanists typify his opponents generally.

<sup>32</sup> Major exceptions to this are, in date order, Paul Avis, Russell Dawn, Anthony Milton, and Margaret Jones-Davies. All these works will be given attention later in this study – see the literature review later in this chapter, and also section 11.4, for details and a more comprehensive (but by no means exhaustive) survey of works about or referencing Field.

<sup>33</sup> The 1628 edition of *Of the Church*, and Field's *Sermon*, have been digitised by TCP, and all editions of Field's (and Nathaniel Field's) works have been scanned. These are available at, e.g., archive.org and EEBO.

<sup>34</sup> *Memorials*, 17; also (BN/1.x). See below, section , for James' pun upon Field's name.

<sup>35</sup> *Memorials*, 21.

<sup>36</sup> Notwithstanding one negative response which we shall examine in chapter 9. See chapter 2.2 below for King James's valuing of Field.

in ours. In an age such as ours when the question of Anglican<sup>37</sup> identity is judged by many to be in considerable crisis, Field's definitive justification of the Church of England as not only *a*, but *the*, legitimate church in England (contra Rome) is of contemporary relevance. His delineation of its identity, deriving from his understanding of the early church Fathers, of the 'best learned' (as he put it)<sup>38</sup> of the medieval schoolmen, of the Reformers, and supremely of Scripture, must, I aver, be considered a valid contribution to the current debate, as it certainly was to the debates of Field's own and subsequent ages (whatever opinions of Field's views might variously be held).

### 1.3 Field's consideration of the Churches of the East

Exactly the same may be said in respect of the ecumenical programme, much debated in our own day. In Field's day, despite his strenuous and implacable opposition to the late medieval papacy (which we shall note in due course), it is Field (amongst some other Reformers, e.g. Hooker) who suggests that it is not unthinkable that the Church of England should one day return to the Roman fold – if only the pope and 'his flatterers'<sup>39</sup> would repent and reform themselves, and decline to seek authority over (and especially to depose) princes. To which observation may be added the conciliatory attitude of Field towards all other world churches in the East, leaving the Church of Rome as the one and only world church to receive his full disapprobation. Field's attitude towards the churches of the East is worth noting. Field's third book seeks to demonstrate which churches satisfy his definition of a true church as conforming to the criteria of his 'notes' or marks of a church as established in his first two books. He writes, 'Thus then, [...] we seek out, which among so many diversities and contrarieties in matters of religion as are at this day found in the world, is the true and Orthodox Church of God.'<sup>40</sup> This opens the first chapter of Book 3, which in the original editions<sup>41</sup> is a brief survey of the eastern churches, noting their ancientness, and describing the sad history by which they separated from one another on non-central matters and especially from the western church. Nonetheless, he insists that all the eastern churches are orthodox in their profession of the Christian faith at its central core, even if they differ on peripheral doctrines, and he decries in very

<sup>37</sup> The term 'Anglican', is technically anachronistic in Field's day, but is used in this study to refer to a devotee, in some sense, of the Church of England. Puritans and conformists are all Anglican, but separatists, at least those giving practical effect to their convictions, cannot be so termed.

<sup>38</sup> E.g. (3.26/1.286).

<sup>39</sup> As in, for example, 'the prevailing faction of the pope's flatterers' (e.g. 3.42/1.341).

<sup>40</sup> (3.1/1.97), or page 61 of the original editions.

<sup>41</sup> 1606 and 1614 editions, 61-63.

strong terms the condemnation of these churches by the Church of Rome, the latter declaring them to be heretical or schismatical or both,<sup>42</sup> they being thus ‘plunged into hell’.<sup>43</sup>

But subsequent to the publication of the original editions of Books 1-4, Field substantially revised Book 3, chapter 1,<sup>44</sup> extending it from 3 to 56 pages. The result, published for the first time in the 1628 edition, is a thoroughgoing survey, quite remarkable in its breadth and depth and attention to detail. This extension of the chapter clearly relies on recent research on the eastern churches having reached the West. For example, Field quotes extensively from the writings of many scholars of eastern Europe – such as the Polish scholar-churchmen Andrzej Frycz Modrzewski<sup>45</sup> and Marcin Kromer<sup>46</sup> (in the latter case, despite this Pole being an opponent of the Reformation). In this extended chapter, Field is not only descriptive of the various eastern churches, charting their history and noting their theological and other distinctives, but demonstrates why he considers them neither heretical nor schismatic.<sup>47</sup> Summarising this verdict,<sup>48</sup> Field concludes, ‘So that after so great clamours and so long contendings, they [the papists] must of necessity be forced in the end to confess they have done them infinite wrong [...] in condemning to hell for no cause so many millions of Christian souls, redeemed with the most precious blood of his dearest Son.’<sup>49</sup> Here Field epitomises his penchant for summarising attributes of churches, or reasons for his considered conclusions, in numbered lists – for example, one list, describing the Armenian Church, concludes: ‘[...] Twenty-third, they deny the supremacy of the pope. Lastly, they are charged to deny original sin; but unjustly.’<sup>50</sup>

‘Out of all that which hath been said,’ Field concludes, ‘[...] all these different sorts of [eastern] Christians [...] agree in one substance of faith, [...] and are all members of the true Catholic Church of Christ.’<sup>51</sup> This is vital for us to note as we commence our study of Field, because it introduces us to

<sup>42</sup> In the immediately following chapter: ‘All these Churches and societies of Christians, in number many, in extent large, in multitudes of men and people huge and great, in continuance most ancient, in defence of the Christian faith constant and undaunted (though enduring the malice and force of cruel, bloody, and potent enemies), the bishop of Rome, with his adherents, judgeth to be heretics, or at least schismatics, and consequently, to have no hope of eternal salvation.’ (3.2/i.153).

<sup>43</sup> (3.1/i.153).

<sup>44</sup> He also substantially revised and extended Book 3, chapter 23, as well as a large proportion of the Appendix to Book 3. This was still a ‘work in progress’ when he died in 1616, as the revision of the Appendix is unfinished, and a multitude of quotations in Latin are left untranslated at the point of his sudden death, which is otherwise unusual for Field.

<sup>45</sup> Field quotes from Frycz’s *De Ecclesia*, book 4 of his *Commentariorum de Republica Emendanda*, of 1551 (3.1/i.104,106). Andrzej Frycz, or Andreas Fricius, 1503-72, Polish scholar, humanist, churchman, theologian, and political theorist.

<sup>46</sup> Field quotes from Kromer’s *sive de origine et rebus gestis Polonorum libri XXX*, of 1555 (3.1/i.98-99). Marcin (or Martin) Kromer (or Cromer, or Cromerus), 1512-89, Polish prince-bishop, diplomat, historian, royal secretary.

<sup>47</sup> ‘Whence it will follow that they are not only free from heresy [...] but from schism also.’ (3.1/i.104).

<sup>48</sup> In advance, early in the chapter, before his many pages of analysis.

<sup>49</sup> (3.1/i.104).

<sup>50</sup> (3.1/i.140).

<sup>51</sup> The full passage reads, very near the end of the chapter, and just before a final ‘list’ running from ‘first’ to ‘[e]ighteenth’, ‘Out of all that which hath been said, two things are observable. First, that, by the merciful goodness of

Field's one driving passion that provides the aetiology for his whole work; this is his implacable insistence that Rome's claims to be the only true church in the world are utterly false; that, instead, in England it is the Church of England which is the true, orthodox, Catholic continuation of the ancient church; and that in the East it is all these other churches which undoubtedly fulfil this criterion, albeit with 'variety in opinion touching things not fundamental'.<sup>52</sup>

#### 1.4 Literature Review

Field himself only ever published the two works mentioned above. The first, in 1604, was his sermon preached before the king at Whitehall on the occasion of the coronation festivities. I discuss this in chapter 5. Secondly, he published his magnum opus, *Of the Church, Five Books*, in two stages; in 1606 appeared Books 1-4, and in 1610 Book 5 with a final Appendix countering some of his detractors. The 1606 printing contained a vast number of printing errors – a common situation in this era. It was re-printed and completely re-typeset – with errors corrected but the same pagination – presumably at Field's instigation, in 1614.<sup>53</sup> The title page is the same except it omits the printer's name,<sup>54</sup> but the print date has been left at 1606. This may provide, amongst much else, a window into Field's perfectionism and pedantry, which I shall note in due course.<sup>55</sup> All five books and appendices were republished by his son Nathaniel in 1628, incorporating Field's late revisions and additions (to Book 3 and to the Appendix to Book 3) written between 1610 and Field's death in 1616. This new edition was re-typeset and reprinted in 1635 and a further edition of the whole work, with modernised spelling (the edition cited in this study) was produced by the Ecclesiastical History Society in 1847-52.<sup>56</sup> Prior to this, in 1843, a new edition was begun by John Sherren Brewer, but only Books 1-3 were issued. I shall remark upon Brewer (and John Henry Newman, who may have been Brewer's inspiration for his edition) in chapter 11. Why this one and part editions were published in the Victorian era is not known, except that it was the stated aim of the ill-fated Ecclesiastical History Society to re-publish old 'lost' volumes of church theology. In addition to the above printed works by

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God, all these different sorts of Christians, though distracted and dissevered, by reason of diversity of ceremonies and outward observations, different manner of delivering certain points of faith, mistaking one another, or variety in opinion touching things not fundamental, do yet agree in one substance of faith, and are so far forth orthodox, that they retain a saving profession of all divine verities absolutely necessary to salvation, and are all members of the true Catholic Church of Christ. The second, that in all the principal controversies touching matters of religion between the papists and those of the reformed Churches, they give testimony of the truth of that we profess.' (3.1/i.151).

<sup>52</sup> (3.1/i.151).

<sup>53</sup> The date is suggested by STC.

<sup>54</sup> The new printer is likely to have been Nicholas Okes who had printed *Book 5*. The 1606 printer had been Humfrey Lownes. The publisher was Simon Waterson for all the 1606-1614 editions.

<sup>55</sup> Alternatively, the reprinting may have been simply to supply additional copies to sell with Book 5 to new readers, if by now Field's name and work is gaining renown.

<sup>56</sup> The EHS edition was reprinted in 1854.

Field, there is a surviving manuscript in the Oxford Bodleian Library<sup>57</sup> of a lecture, one of three, given by Field in 1597 in incepting for his DD degree.<sup>58</sup>

It should be noted that in respect of either published or unpublished writings, Field is far less prolific than many other contemporaries. Of the very many sermons he preached in the course of his career, we have just the one, in contrast to, for example, Lancelot Andrewes. I comment on the paucity of Field's writings in due course.

Field was, needless to say, responded to negatively by certain recusant<sup>59</sup> writers. A few wrote against him in his lifetime, whom Field in turn responds to in his final Appendices of 1610 – namely Higgons, Broughton, Maihew and (in Field's revisions published 1628) 'Brereley'; and a few wrote later, notably Sylvester Norris and Anthony Champney.<sup>60</sup> We shall meet some of these in due course, especially Higgons in chapter 10. In the decades following Field's death, Field was referred to occasionally, though briefly, with approval – for example, by John White, Joseph Hall and Thomas Fuller (I refer to these again in chapter 3). Apart from the biographies of Nathaniel Field and Anthony Wood, it is not until Samuel Taylor Coleridge that we find substantial attention given to Field – in his 'Notes on Field and the Church' and in his marginalia in a copy of Field's later edition (see chapter 3). Following him and Newman, who also held a certain admiration for Field, I find only a few writers giving as much as a few consecutive pages or more to assessing or analysing Field. The first was Paul Avis who devoted several pages to Field in his *Anglicanism and the Christian Church* (1989).<sup>61</sup> Following Avis, Anthony Milton quotes Field numerous times, though not at length on each occasion, in his *Catholic and Reformed* (1995).<sup>62</sup> Margaret Jones-Davies analyses Field's sermon in her 'Dr.

<sup>57</sup> Richard Field, *Doctrina praedestinationis* (Oxford Bodleian Library, MS Rawlinson d. 399)

<sup>58</sup> See section 11.3 for further brief details.

<sup>59</sup> The term 'recusant' is a difficult one, because it may be perceived to have pejorative overtones. Nonetheless, it was a common term in Field's era, albeit often used pejoratively by many. The term is used in this study without prejudice, denoting simply a Roman Catholic who to one extent or another is minded to resist the protestantisation of Britain, seeking to practise Roman Catholicism as far as possible, illegally, usually in secret because of contemporary repressive measures against it. This study does not take a position on this matter, but does report the positions of others, Field included.

<sup>60</sup> Field responds in his 1610 Book 5 Appendix to Theophilus Higgons, *The First Motive of T.H. Maister of Arts, and Lately Minister, to suspect the integrity of his religion* [...] (Douai: 1609); Richard Broughton, *The First Part of Protestants Proofes* (England: English Secret Press, 1607); and Edward Maihew, *A Treatise of the Groundes of the Old and Newe Religion* (England: English Secret Press, 1608); and to John Brereley (pseudonym for James Anderton), *The Protestants Apologie for the Roman Church* (St Omer: English College Press, 1608), in his (Field's) posthumously published (1628) revised Appendix to Book 3. Field spells Brereley as 'Brerely'. Sylvester Norris, *An Antidote or Treatise of Thirty Controversies* (St Omer: English College Press, 1615, 1619, 1622), also responded to Field, though too late for Field to take notice. Likewise Anthony Champney, *A Treatise of the Vocation of Bishops, and other Ecclesiasticall Ministers proving the ministers of the pretended reformed churches in generall, to have no calling against Monsieur Du Plessis, and Mr. Doctour Feild : and in particular the pretended bishops in England, to be no true bishops against Mr. Mason* (Douay: 1616).

<sup>61</sup> Cited above.

<sup>62</sup> Anthony Milton, *Catholic and Reformed: the Roman and Protestant Churches in English Protestant Thought 1600-1640* (in the series: Cambridge Studies in early modern British History) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).



Richard Field and King James I' (2004).<sup>63</sup> Finally Russell Dawn analyses Field's theologies of the Eucharist and of Predestination in his doctoral thesis.<sup>64</sup> I examine and interact with these modern authors later in this study.<sup>65</sup>

In 1665 Field's son Nathaniel wrote a biography of his father, not published until 1717, upon which all later biographies are based.<sup>66</sup> Anthony Wood and John Frith (a fellow Windsor canon) supply a few other biographical fragments, as mentioned in chapter 2. Further, much more information can be gleaned about the life of Field from the wealth of archive data available in TNA and local record offices. Considerable research in these arenas has been done before, during and after writing the entry for Field in the new 2004 *ODNB*. Biographical data for its own sake is not the purpose of this study. However, windows into the person can inform our understanding of the purpose, the motives, the drive, and the reception of any scholar, and it is my belief, as I shall outline below, that Field is no exception. Therefore this study will include some of the results of my biographical research in so far as they touch upon Field's character, life, churchmanship and scholarship.

Beyond all the above, there is no extended study of Field or his writings. However, a number of modern writers from the nineteenth century onwards, especially those writing upon aspects of early modern English church history, have referred to Field piecemeal in their writings. These are significant in respect of the narrower concerns of those authors dealing with various doctrinal and ecclesiological issues. Prominent among them are Collinson, Fincham, Lake, Milton, White, Sykes and

<sup>63</sup> Margaret Jones-Davies, 'Dr. Richard Field and King James I: *Politics in the Pulpit*. A Commentary on *A Learned Sermon*', in *The Struggle for the Succession in Late Elizabethan England: Politics, Polemics and Cultural Representations*, ed. by Jean-Christophe Mayer (Montpellier, France: Université Paul-Valéry Montpellier, 2004).

<sup>64</sup> Cited above, and assessed in chapter 7.

<sup>65</sup> Avis in chapter 7; Jones-Davies in chapter 5; Dawn in chapter 2; Milton, and Dawn again, in chapter 11.

<sup>66</sup> Nathaniel Field, *Some Short Memorials Concerning the Life of that Reverend Divine Doctor Richard Field*, ed. by John le Nève (London: John le Nève, 1717), published just over 100 years after Field's death. This is the most substantial original source of biographical information about Field. One copy of this, once owned by White Kennett (1660-1728) to whom le Nève dedicated the work, held in the British Library, has manuscript annotations on extra leaves bound together with the printed leaves of the published work. These annotations, most in le Nève's hand, supply useful but not otherwise corroborated additional biographical information. I analyse this particular copy later in this study. *Some Short Memorials* can be supplemented by academic information from Foster's *Alumni Oxonienses 1500-1714* (Oxford/London: 1841-1842). There are other biographies, the earliest of which is the brief but almost contemporary assessment of Field by Thomas Frith in his *Liber Collegii*, noted elsewhere in this study. Also, there is the entry on Field by Anthony Wood (1632-1695) in his *Athenae Oxonienses*. The first edition (1691) has a brief and altogether incomplete entry (I, 349, entry 432), but the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, I, 410, entry 482 (London: 1721), or the edition edited by P. Bliss, II, 181, (London: 1813-1820), entry 411, has a fuller entry clearly based on Nathaniel Field and Oxford University records, including Wood's own *Fasti*. There are also, but heavily dependent on the foregoing: Gough's *Life of Field* in his *Biographia Britannica*, VI, part I (London: 1747-1766), later transcribed in Alexander Chalmers (ed.), *Biographical Dictionary*, XIV, 279-283 (London: 1812-1817); the *Biographical Notice* in the Ecclesiastical History Society's edition of Field's *Of the Church* (Cambridge: 1847-1852), I, iii; and the original entry on Field by Richard Hooper, rector of Upton, Oxfordshire, in the *Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: 1888). Lastly, there is my own extensive research at PRO, at Windsor archives, and at various cathedral and university archives, local record offices (especially Hampshire, Hertfordshire, Berkshire), and the British Library, culminating in my entry on Field written for the new *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004). A full biography has yet to be written.

Tyacke.<sup>67</sup> I do not substantially interact with most of these modern authors in this study, because their brief analyses are either very general, or are specific in narrower fields outside the scope of this study (but which are fields, I suggest, certainly worthy of further, major attention). Typically, these studies cite a number of writers, of whom Field is just one from a larger spectrum, in analysing their own subject of concern. I shall, though, later in the study, pay some attention to the contributions of these modern scholars, fairly briefly, except in the case of Milton on whom I write at greater length.<sup>68</sup>

### 1.5 The aim of the remainder of this study

The relative neglect of a scholar for four centuries should sound an initial warning, of course. Perhaps the scholar's contribution to the debate of his age was not considered of adequate worth at all – either in his time or subsequently; but this is certainly not the case with Field. Or perhaps, for example, the scholar concerned did not make a contribution to his or her contemporary debate which was *subsequently* widely considered to be of sufficient *additional* merit beyond the extant scholarship from their own era – even if they had been admired and given due consideration in that era. Nonetheless, it is my own considered opinion, reflecting the testimonies both old and recent such as I have cited above, and such as I examine in the pages that follow, that in Field's case he deserves to be granted a re-visit.

To that end it is my intention in this study to achieve three somewhat different purposes. First, in this current introductory Section1 ('Who is Field?', chapters 1-4), I examine Field the person, assessing his standing in his own time, giving biographical data to this end; for example, I examine a unique copy of Field's biography by his son, Nathaniel, containing many manuscript annotations from the early eighteenth century. Further, I assess Field's erudition, then the value of a sample of his predecessors, and begin to argue that Field's contribution is not superfluous, but complementary, to them.

Secondly, in Section2 (chapters 5-8), I examine Field's writings, first Field's *Sermon* and then his *Of the Church*, in order to assess two principal aspects of his work – namely his high view of scripture (in the *Sermon*), and then the development of his ecclesiology from first principles, with an assessment of his 'notes of the church' and of his stress on the importance of ministerial orders. The purpose will be to obtain a sense of the shape, character, strengths, and shortcomings (and, ultimately, usefulness) of his contribution to early-modern English ecclesiology. My conclusion will be that Field gives us not simply 'a' systematic ecclesiology, although he does so thoroughly, but primarily a

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<sup>67</sup> See bibliography for a list of relevant works by these scholars.

<sup>68</sup> See sections 11.2 and 11.4 below.

cogent defence of the validity of the Church of England as a legitimate church. His polemicism against Rome, and his irenicism towards everything else, will be to the fore.

Thirdly, in Section 3 (chapters 9-11), I aim to set Field within the context of his own time by examining a sample of then contemporary reactions to Field and his writings, and his response to them, followed by a sample of later and modern writers who make use of Field. I examine how Field treats one renowned scholar-churchman (Jean Gerson) within the pre-Reformation Church of Rome. And I assess one alleged negative reaction against Field by King James himself. Again, this will be only a sample, but we do need to know that Field existed not in a vacuum but in a vibrant church and court society where ecclesiological debate was arguably more strident than ever before or since. Following this, one key writer from each of the nineteenth, twentieth and twenty-first centuries receive attention, each giving Field considerable attention. Finally, a conclusion sums up Field's worth.

Thus, necessarily, the material I cover will be only a sample of what could be possible in an extensive survey. My conclusions may be somewhat provisional pending further study. But by offering an analysis of just a small sample of Field's work and reactions to it, the intention is to demonstrate him to be a theological thinker worthy of renewed consideration, setting Field in the context of his own time, in the hope that we may be persuaded that he is worthily and appropriately employable in the scholarly domain today.

The maine of what he hath Written, was never Answered. Some have taken Exceptions against particular Passages here and there a Place, but the Maine and what is most Materiall they have wholly let alone.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Field's son Nathaniel, in *Memorials*, 20.

## Chapter 2

### – Field’s Biographies –

#### 2. Abstract of this chapter

Except for Wood’s original of his 1691 *Athenae*<sup>1</sup> and Frith’s<sup>2</sup> work of 1620 (both very brief), all the extant biographies of Field (including the *DNB* entry, my own *ODNB* entry, and Wood’s revised biography in his 1721 *Athenae*) are based predominantly upon one written in 1665 by his son Nathaniel, published as *Some Short Memorials* [...] in 1717 by John le Nève. Wood specifically acknowledges his debt to *Memorials* in the 1721 edition of his *Athenae*.<sup>4</sup> Via a biographical study of Field’s children, I shall show why it fell to Nathaniel to write this biography, and how and why it was published. I then draw attention to and review one unique, important and little-known instance<sup>5</sup> of this printed biography, held in the British Library, which includes a substantial number of manuscript insertions representing additional material – mostly originating from Nathaniel.

Additionally, I interact with Dawn’s study of how this biography is typical of its genre of the time; this study suggests that some aspects of Nathaniel’s biography, by being made to fit the genre, may not be a reliable reflection of reality. Throughout this chapter I argue for *Memorials* being an essentially trustworthy, albeit effusive, biography.

Much of this chapter concerns biographical research utilising many little-known sources. Such research, however interesting in its own right, could fill an entire research paper. In this study I omit most of this biographical data accruing from my research, restricting myself to that which bears – albeit tangentially, sometimes, but nonetheless significantly – upon the life, character, scholarship and defining purpose of Field and his work.

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<sup>1</sup> Anthony Wood, *Athenae Oxonienses*, 1<sup>st</sup> edn, 2 vols (London: 1691-1692), I (1691), 349-350, entry 432 on Field.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas Frith, *Frith’s Old Register or Liber Collegii*. See above for analysis and shortly below for further treatment.

<sup>3</sup> Cited above.

<sup>4</sup> Anthony Wood, *Athenae Oxonienses*, 2 vols (London: 1721), I (1721), 410-413, entry 482 on Field.

<sup>5</sup> British Library shelf mark G14467.

## 2.1 Introduction

Richardus Field huius olim Collegii Canonicus, & Ecclesia Gloucestrensis, Decan. Vere Doctor Theologiae, et author Librorum V de Ecclesia. Una cum Elisabetha Harrisia Sanctissima Charissima Coniuge ex qua sex reliquit filios, filiam unicam. Hic sub communi Marmore Expectant Christi Reditum; qui Felicitatem, quam ingressi sunt, Adventu suo Perficiat ac Consummet. Obierunt in Domino.<sup>6</sup>

*Some Short Memorials* consists of le Nève's reproduction<sup>7</sup> of Nathaniel Field's 'fair copy' as he prepared it for publication, together with a dedication<sup>8</sup> written by le Nève to White Kennett.<sup>9</sup> Within this dedication le Nève reproduces: first, a 'Paragraph as an Introduction'<sup>10</sup> written by Nathaniel in the original 'foul draught'<sup>11</sup> (which, in case of doubt, is 'ready to be produced to justify the Authority of it');<sup>12</sup> secondly, Frith's entry on Field transcribed from his register of deans and canons of Windsor (known as *Liber Collegii*);<sup>13</sup> thirdly, Wood's original 1691 biography of Field;<sup>14</sup> and fourthly, one brief independent datum.<sup>15</sup>

Nathaniel Field, the second son (out of those who survived infancy) of Richard Field and Elizabeth Harris, wrote this short biography of his father late in 1665, the year before Nathaniel's death in March 1666. The date of writing is supplied by Nathaniel himself ('it being 49 years since he [Field] died') in his 'foul draught' introduction.<sup>16</sup> Confirming the late-1665 date of writing is a letter of Nathaniel Field to William Lucy, dated October 1665, which I analyse below. We know the reason why le Nève addressed his dedication to Kennett: Kennett had assisted le Nève in his previous major 1716 publication, *Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae*, which borrowed much on Kennett's *Collections*.<sup>17</sup> Le Nève acknowledges this: 'I [...] acknowledge my entire Obligations to you for the generous

<sup>6</sup> The inscription on the brass upon the marble slab, now gone, covering the grave of Richard and Elizabeth Field in the nave of St George's Chapel, Windsor. Translation: 'Richard Field, formerly canon of this college, and dean of the cathedral of Gloucester, truly a doctor of divinity, and author of five books of the church, together with Elizabeth Harris, a most saintly and beloved wife, by whom he has left six sons and an only daughter, await here under a single marble stone the return of Christ, who will, by his coming, complete and make perfect the happiness upon which they have entered. They died in the Lord, he AD 1616, in the 55<sup>th</sup> year of his age, and she AD 1614, in the 41<sup>st</sup> year of her age.'

<sup>7</sup> *Memorials*, 1-60.

<sup>8</sup> *Memorials*, iii-xii.

<sup>9</sup> White Kennett, DD, 1660-1728, Dean of Peterborough and royal chaplain at the time of *Memorials*' publication, later Bishop of Peterborough, 1718.

<sup>10</sup> At *Memorials*, iv.

<sup>11</sup> I shall explain the 'foul draft' and the 'fair copy' later in this chapter.

<sup>12</sup> *Memorials*, iv. Le Nève states that the 'foul Draught, as well as the fair Copy, lye ready to be produced to justify the Authority of it' (*Memorials*, xi).

<sup>13</sup> *Memorials*, v. I explain *Liber Collegii* shortly in this chapter.

<sup>14</sup> *Memorials*, viii.

<sup>15</sup> Concerning Chelsea College – see below.

<sup>16</sup> *Memorials*, iv.

<sup>17</sup> Many of White Kennett's manuscripts are now part of the Lansdowne collection, numbers 935-1041, in the British Library.

Assistance I received from you in my last Undertaking for the publicke Service'.<sup>18</sup> The biography was not published by John le Nève until half a century after Nathaniel had written it, in January 1717.<sup>19</sup> It had passed to le Nève from Nathaniel Field's estate via Nathaniel's son Richard (an MD), then via the latter's acquaintance Peter le Nève (a kinsman of John), and then via another 'respected' but unnamed 'Gentleman',<sup>20</sup> as shown below. We should regard it as propitious that Field's grandson Richard knew someone who knew someone who knew the failing publisher le Nève, for without the latter's publication Field may have remained rather more in obscurity than has been the case.

## 2.2 Frith's and Wood's Biographies

We know that the two original biographical portraits of Field are not dependent upon *Memorials* because, first, Frith's predates it by half a century. This is Thomas Frith (1569-1631, matriculated Magdalen Hall, Oxford, 1585; MA 1594, BD 1604), a fellow canon of Windsor (1610-31), who is celebrated as having written in Latin manuscript a register of all the deans and canons of Windsor since its inception in the fourteenth century. This register is now preserved in English translation, though with only essential biographical particulars as *Fasti Wyndesorienses*<sup>21</sup> (and, in the case of Field, without Frith's admiring comments). The original manuscript – once lost perhaps at the end of the reign of Charles I (c.1649), but subsequently recovered<sup>22</sup> – is preserved in the Windsor archives, known as *Liber Collegii* or as *Frith's Old Register*. In his original manuscript, Frith includes his own personal memories of Field and le Nève transcribes them in his dedication. Frith recalls the time when he was a student at Magdalen Hall studying for his BA from 1585 (aged 16) to 1589.<sup>23</sup> He writes of himself, 'being present then, witnessing, seeing, hearing' the 'erudite' and 'learned' Field. And this was when Field – having graduated MA the year before (aged 22) and whilst studying to graduate BD (1592) – was making a name for himself in the Hall as catechism lecturer, as daily reader in logic and philosophy, and as a disputant – not least, engaging in controversies against the Romanists Bellarmine and others, every Sunday. And all of this was 'to great applause before a great gathering of listeners'.<sup>24</sup> Describing Field's books as 'extremely learned', Frith clearly rejoices in what

<sup>18</sup> *Memorials*, xii.

<sup>19</sup> Le Nève's title page has '1716-17', reflecting the then two current conventions for the beginning of the calendar year (see Note on terminology).

<sup>20</sup> *Memorials*, xi.

<sup>21</sup> *Fasti Wyndesorienses: the Deans and Canons of Windsor*, ed. by Sidney Leslie Ollard (Windsor: The Dean and Canons of St George's Chapel, 1950) (Volume VIII of *Historical monographs relating to St. George's Chapel, Windsor Castle* (Windsor: 1939-2015)). The original manuscript, once lost, then recovered for the St George's, Windsor, archives, can be found there, titled *Liber Collegii*, catalogued as IV.B.4. It is also transcribed and printed at the end of Elias Ashmole, *Antiquities of the County of Berks*, 3 vols (London: 1719), III, 266-7. The complete Latin text of Frith's account of Field is transcribed by le Nève in *Memorials*, v-vii.

<sup>22</sup> Shelagh Bond, 'The return of *Liber Collegii* to Windsor' in *Journal of the Society of Archivists*, IV, 1973, Issue 8, 653-654.

<sup>23</sup> Joseph Foster, *Alumni Oxonienses* (Oxford: Parker and Co., 1891), 536.

<sup>24</sup> In the then current context this means that he was universally held in high esteem.

he sees as Field's verbal conquest of Romanism: 'he definitively demolished that Romanist edifice, yes indeed the haughtiness and speciosity of that bragging church; so that spectre, bringing in novelties to frighten the timid and entice the unwary, was destroyed'.<sup>25</sup> We thus get a clear picture of Frith's adulation of Field, and to his witness to everyone else's admiration – and this testimony is entirely independent of, and considerably predates, Nathaniel's biography.

A second reason we are sure that both Wood's (original) and Frith's biographies are not derived from, and thus antedate, Nathaniel's is that they contain a datum seemingly unknown to Nathaniel – with Wood being probably dependent upon Frith (on account of their jointly mistaking Field's death date – see below). Both record Field's appointment as divinity reader at Winchester Cathedral, after he graduated BD (1592) and before his Lincoln's Inn lectureship appointment (1594), for all or part of that period. Why Nathaniel did not know of this, or why he did not record it, I discuss below. Philip Bliss, the editor of the third edition<sup>26</sup> of Wood's *Athenae*, specifically states that it was dependent upon *Memorials*.<sup>27</sup> Bliss here provides us with a conundrum concerning Field's matriculation at Oxford. Nathaniel tells us that his father was at Magdalen Hall, with no mention of Magdalen College. In fact, Field's matriculation there is not recorded in the matriculation registers (a not unknown occurrence). But Wood has discovered this entry: 'Coll. Magdal. Richardus Fyeld, Cantius, pleb. fil.' for 1581, the year of Field's BA, four years after he went up, and Bliss, quoting Gutch, insists it is 'undoubtedly correct' that this is Field's matriculation record. Thus Wood assumes<sup>28</sup> (and Foster<sup>29</sup> and *DNB*<sup>30</sup> and *BN*<sup>31</sup> follow him) that Field went up to Magdalen College, not matriculating until graduating BA, and transferred to Magdalen Hall then. I believe this to be unlikely and that the Kent Field is another person, for a number of reasons.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>25</sup> These quotations from Frith are my own rough translation of his words from the Latin as transcribed at *Memorials*, vi, which concurs, bar an abbreviation or two, with other versions available.

<sup>26</sup> Bliss' re-editing of Wood's second edition.

<sup>27</sup> Anthony Wood and Philip Bliss, *Athenae Oxonienses* (London: 1815), II, 185-6.

<sup>28</sup> In both the 1691 and the 1721 editions of his *Athenae*.

<sup>29</sup> *Foster*, 489.

<sup>30</sup> *DNB* makes an error in declaring that Field 'matriculated at the age of sixteen (1577) as of Magdalen College, Oxford, where he remained till he took his B.A. degree [...], when he removed to Magdalen Hall'. But *DNB* cannot have it both ways; *either* Field matriculated at Magdalen College aged 19 in 1581 (, as Wood assumes), *or* he matriculated aged 16 at Magdalen Hall, as I provisionally believe. Wood, *BN* and *DNB* all assume Field remained at Magdalen College until he was of BA standing, then moved to Magdalen Hall. My belief is he was only ever at Magdalen Hall. He certainly graduated BA as of Magdalen Hall.

<sup>31</sup> (*BN*/i.iv).

<sup>32</sup> My reasons in full are these (see text above for the text of the matriculation record): (1) Nathaniel Field knows of no such membership of Magdalen College (*Memorials*, 2); Nathaniel is at pains to say that Field's father 'maintained him altogether at his owne Charge a Commoner in Magdalene=Hall, without the Help of any Schollarship or Fellowship', and 'in that house he spent all his Time, until he left the Universitie'. (2) Apart from Wood's guess, there is no indication anywhere else of the possibility that Field was at Magdalen College for four years. (3) I have found no evidence at all that either Field himself or the Field family generally were ever in Kent; the family had for generations lived in the Hemel Hempstead region of Hertfordshire, where I have found wills and records going back generations. (4) Field was twenty at the alleged matriculation date, not nineteen. (5) Although Field's name is spelt in a number of alternative

If 'Fyeld, Cantius' is our Field, then it involves several mistakes. But Nathaniel reports data such as that 'His Father finding him to be of more than ordinarie Parts, bred him up a Schollar, first in the Countrie [at the Free School of Barkhamstead]<sup>[33]</sup> and afterwards in the Universitie of Oxford, where he maintained him altogether at his owne Charge a Commoner in Magdalen Hall, [...] in that House he spent all his Time, until he left the Universitie'.<sup>34</sup> I suggest that if Nathaniel is confident to state these things, it is unlikely he did not know of a time spent at Magdalen College, and that this matriculation entry refers to someone else. Field has no known connection with Kent. It is just possible that another matriculation entry is our Field's: 'Feild, Robert, of Herts, pleb. Magdalen Hall, 17 July, 1578, aged 17':<sup>35</sup> this would entail just one error, in the name; matriculation one year after going up would not be unusual. Foster details only the matriculation of this Robert – so his graduation, if it happened, is not otherwise accounted for. This datum is perhaps of little account, save that it illustrates the need for the researcher to be careful, for mistakes or assumptions can get repeated until they become 'true by multiple re-telling'. We shall encounter several examples of the need to be careful, especially when interpreting Field, in the course of this study.

Interestingly, in transcribing Wood's 1691 biography, le Nève cuts it short just before the account of Field's death, declaring: 'After [this] follows an imperfect if not false Account of his [Field's] Death, Burial, and Inscription, which will be found better done in their proper Places'.<sup>36</sup> But in fact Wood's account is completely accurate save only for a discrepancy over the date of Field's death. Wood, following Frith, says '21 Nov' 1616, whereas Nathaniel has 'November 15'.<sup>37</sup> The correct date is certainly 15 November, as the St George's Chapter Acts record Field as being 'deceased' on 16 November.<sup>38</sup> Frith also wrongly records Field's age at death as 57 instead of the correct 55. Field's death was following an 'Apoplexie, or [...] breaking inwardly, or some other like Cause, which suddenly deprived him of all Sence and Motion' – perhaps a stroke – after Field 'had bin Sick but a little while'<sup>39</sup> (a fact corroborated by the St George's chapter acts).<sup>40</sup>

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ways (such as, commonly, Feild, Feilde, Feld), the matriculation record's 'Fyeld' is not otherwise among them.

(6) Although it was not unknown for a student graduating BA to matriculate at the same time, having previously failed to do so, the matriculation here postdates Field's graduation BA at Magdalen Hall (by six days), and we need rather more solid evidence for us to connect the two than we have here, with so much discrepancy and doubt.

<sup>33</sup> These words in brackets are added as a manuscript annotation on the printed page 2 in copy G14467 (explained below). Berkhamsted School today, still extant as such, is aware of Field's having been there. Berkhamsted was spelled variously in the early modern era.

<sup>34</sup> *Memorials*, 2.

<sup>35</sup> *Foster*, 489.

<sup>36</sup> *Memorials*, x. It is not clear what he means by the 'proper Places' to which he refers.

<sup>37</sup> *Memorials*, vii, 56; Wood, *Athenae*, (1691), i, 350.

<sup>38</sup> Shelagh Bond, (ed.), *The Chapter Acts*, 95.

<sup>39</sup> *Memorials*, 56.

<sup>40</sup> Shelagh Bond, (ed.), *The Chapter Acts*, 95, re. 9 November 1616.



Although le Nève in his dedication ascribes to Wood an 'imperfect if not false' account of Field's demise, later, at the end of *Memorials*, he inexplicably transcribes Wood's account almost verbatim, giving details of Field's burial at Windsor and the inscription on his tomb, attributing the account to Wood's 1691 *Athenae*.<sup>41</sup> There seems no accounting for this discrepancy between the beginning and end of *Memorials*. Le Nève also adds, at the very end, a brief and incomplete 'Pedigree' (i.e. family tree)<sup>42</sup> for which he is indebted to the 'Gentleman'<sup>43</sup> who had originally passed the manuscript of *Memorials* to him from Peter le Nève, the friend of Richard Field, MD. It should be noted that the brass plate and inscription fastened to the black marble slab atop Field's tomb 'below the Chaire' in St George's chapel,<sup>44</sup> did not include an image of Field. *DNB* made this claim, but adducing no evidence, and indeed the evidence is against this claim.<sup>45</sup> We do not therefore have a likeness of Field, but we do, however, have a possible signature for him in the Windsor archives.<sup>46</sup> The inscribed brass plate commemorates Field and his first wife Elizabeth Harris (who is buried with Field in the tomb beneath) and their 'six sons and one daughter'<sup>47</sup> who were alive at the time of Field's death. Field's marble and inscription, with all others in the nave, had disappeared after a repaving of the floor in 1790.

There is an additional biographical datum known to le Nève, and seemingly unknown to all three of Frith, Wood and Nathaniel, namely that Field was named as a fellow for the nascent but ill-fated 'King James's College at Chelsea'.<sup>48</sup> Originally proposed by Matthew Sutcliffe, Dean of Exeter,<sup>49</sup> Chelsea College was intended to be a grand edifice at Chelsea, instituted for the purpose of anti-Rome polemical research and writing. Founded in 1610, with the enthusiastic support of King James and Archbishop Bancroft, a provost and nineteen fellows were nominated by the King himself, and these included Field,<sup>50</sup> John White,<sup>51</sup> John Overall and Robert Abbot – all notable scholars. As a dean,

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<sup>41</sup> *Memorials*, 58-59.

<sup>42</sup> The line given, starting with Field's great-great-grandfather, is Ralph Field > Thomas > Thomas > John > Richard (DD) > Nathaniel > Richard (MD). The 'pedigree' also notes Field's two marriages and the MD Richard's death in 1696, and the latter's sister Elizabeth, his 'heir'.

<sup>43</sup> *Memorials*, 60, referencing xi.

<sup>44</sup> Ashmole, 155.

<sup>45</sup> Shelagh Bond, (ed.), *The Monuments*, 77.

<sup>46</sup> Manuscript XV.56.56 at Windsor archives; Field here signs the then precentor's accounts as auditor.

<sup>47</sup> *Memorials* states that the inscription is on a 'Copper-Plate fastened' on the 'Plank of black Marble' laid over Field's grave 'in the outer Chappel of St. George at Windsor, a little below the Chaire', 'sex reliquit filios, filiam unicam', *Memorials*, 58-59. This is corroborated by Ashmole's *Antiquities of Berkshire*. The text of the inscription (see 2.1 above for the text) is recorded in Shelagh Bond, (ed.), *The Monuments*, 77, and in Joseph Pote, *The History and Antiquities of Windsor*, 385, located by Pote as being 'in the body of the church'.

<sup>48</sup> Thomas Faulkner, (ed.), *An Historical and Descriptive Account of the Royal Hospital [...] King James's College, at Chelsea* (London: Thomas Faulkner, 1805), 4-44.

<sup>49</sup> Matthew Sutcliffe, 1549/50-1629, Dean of Exeter, anti-Rome and anti-Arminian polemicist and conformist apologist. Sutcliffe not only proposed the College, but liberally endowed it.

<sup>50</sup> Faulkner includes a brief biography of the first fellows, including Field, though with no original content – Field's nomination is recorded at Faulkner, *An Historical and Descriptive Account*, 22-23.

<sup>51</sup> Possibly, though not certainly, the John White who wrote *The Way to the True Church*, cited elsewhere in this study.

Field was high (third) in the list. Le Nève states that he found reference to Field's appointment to Chelsea College in White Kennett's collections, noting its absence from Nathaniel Field's *Life*.<sup>52</sup> Chelsea College did not flourish – even under James, and especially under Charles I – and it essentially ceased operating under Cromwell. Only a small portion of the intended building was erected, and it is unlikely that Field or most other fellows ever resided or worked there – which perhaps supplies the reason Nathaniel and Wood did not know of this appointment.

We note Nathaniel's testimony that certain notable individuals loved Field for his company and conversation, such as Dr John Reynolds, Sir Henry Savile, Sir Henry Neville, Dr Giles Thomson (Dean of Windsor), Dr Ralph Barlow (Dean of Wells), Dr Ralph Kettle (or Kettell, president of Trinity College Oxford), Dr John White (later chaplain to King James), Joseph Hall (bishop of Exeter, then Norwich), Richard Kingsmill, Sir William Kingsmill, Dr Richard Crakanthorpe,<sup>53</sup> an unnamed 'able Divine', and an unnamed 'judicious Divine'. He was admired by the 'Companie of many Learned Men' at Windsor; At Gloucester, 'Whensoever he Preached there he was heard by a great and a full Auditorie, the People of that Place much Honouring and Loving him';<sup>54</sup> 'every one' and 'many' at Oxford during Field's time there who 'did acknowledge him' to be 'so eminently the best' disputant. To this list we can add King James himself who 'did very much Honour and Respect [Field], and delighted to Discourse with him about Points of Divinitie' (James routinely had a divine standing behind him to talk with him as he (James) ate his meals otherwise alone).<sup>55</sup> It is alleged by Field's son Nathaniel, that James 'Descanting upon his name' also said, on first hearing Field preach, 'Is his name Field? This is a Field for God to Dwell in'.<sup>56</sup>

We also note Field as the preferred choice to dispute before the king at the divinity act at Oxford in 1605, which was 'heard with great Attention and Delight by all that were present';<sup>57</sup> to preach the sermon before King James at Whitehall at his coronation celebrations in March 1604 (Field's only published sermon); and before the king during a visit to Hampshire (the bishop 'taking notice of his Worth and Sufficiency');<sup>58</sup> – and, in particular, at Windsor when in 1611 the king wished 'to heare the Canons Preach in their Order that he may see what is in them',<sup>59</sup> where Field was preferred above

<sup>52</sup> *Memorials*, vii. Le Nève notes that it is also to be found in Fuller's *Church History*: Thomas Fuller, DD, *The Church History of Britain* [...] (London: for John Williams, 1655), book 10, 52.

<sup>53</sup> Richard Crakanthorpe, (1568-1624), DD (1606), Queen's College, Oxford (from 1584), BA 1587, MA 1590, BD 1597, influenced by John Reynolds, scholar and divine, anti-papal controversialist and anti-Ramist logician, renowned preacher and disputant, author of *Defensio Ecclesiae Anglicanae* (1625, and Oxford: 1847).

<sup>54</sup> *Memorials*, 11.

<sup>55</sup> The preceding quotations are from *Memorials*, 3-5, 11-15.

<sup>56</sup> *Memorials*, 13; (BN/I.viii).

<sup>57</sup> The disputation was with Dr Aglionby, on the subject, 'An Sancti & Angeli cognoscant cogitationes cordium', that is, 'Whether the Saints and the Angels know the thoughts of [man's] heart'. *Memorials*, 10.

<sup>58</sup> *Memorials*, 14-15.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*

the other prebends. The dean, Dr Giles Thomson, required Field not only to preach in his turn then, but to take the place of any other prebend unable to fulfil his duty. In a letter to Field, Dean Thomson described him as 'a sure Card to provide against the coming of the King to Preach, that by you [Field] he might receive Contentment';<sup>60</sup> It was the clerk of the closet, Richard Neile, bishop of Lichfield and future high churchman, who had requested Thomson 'by word of mouth' to nominate Field thus. In any case, we are told that Field preached at Windsor more than any other prebend, and that 'the Church was never fuller than when he Preached'.<sup>61</sup> Field's renown as a preacher began with a puritan lectureship at Carfax, Oxford, and he also held a lectureship at Winchester Cathedral.

Clearly we must read all this through the lens of well-intentioned admiration: it is of course sincere flattery of Field's memory and the tone is understandably effusive. But such wealth of testimony cannot be discounted as being untrue – especially as so much, by letter or in print, is attested outside Nathaniel's own recollections and filial adulation. Nonetheless, I would suggest that the degree of the effusiveness of Nathaniel's praise for his father should indeed be cautiously filtered through our understanding that an admiring son writes purple prose about a father he loves and respects. Later we shall interact with a suggestion made to this end by the modern scholar, Russell Dawn.

On the other hand, we must consider the reality that for Field preferment came slowly. His death aged 55 was not as a bishop and, arguably, this is not as one would expect of one so revered – although he did eventually have the assurance (by letter dated 11 July 1616 from Buckingham, transcribed by Nathaniel) of the See of Oxford when it should become vacant.<sup>62</sup> However, his death came shortly afterwards, before the promise was realised. Earlier he had been recommended for Salisbury, but Richard Abbot (brother of the then archbishop) had been preferred in his place,<sup>63</sup> and an independent witness, Bishop Hall, attests that 'Dr. Field, the learned and worthy Dean of Glocester, was by his potent Friends put into such Assurances of' the 'Deanry of Worcester'.<sup>64</sup> This was much more valuable ('that ample house')<sup>65</sup> since Worcester is an ancient diocese – in contrast to Gloucester, which dates only from 1541 (the cathedral being the former abbey church of St Peter until the then recent dissolution). Given Field's character and particular gift-set, however, it must be questioned whether he would have found episcopal office suited to his temperament and style. The

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<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>61</sup> *Memorials*, 15.

<sup>62</sup> *Memorials*, 16.

<sup>63</sup> *Memorials*, 15.

<sup>64</sup> Joseph Hall, DD (1610), 1574-1656, 'Observations of some Specialities of Divine Providence in the Life of Jos. Hall' (1647), 33, in *The Shaking of the Olive-tree [...] with some specialities of divine providence in his life, noted by his own hand* (London: 1660), transcribed by Nathaniel with variant spellings in *Memorials*, 17-18.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*

Windsor cloister and the Burghclere hearth may have been (and indeed remained) his much more suited lot

But, as we have seen, Field 'that Reverend, and better Deserving Divine'<sup>66</sup> died, and Hall became dean of Worcester instead whilst William Laud succeeded Field at Gloucester. Hall's testimony to Field's worth is noteworthy given that he (Hall) himself, DD in 1610, was a very capable scholar, admired preacher, prolific author, and courtier.<sup>67</sup> It is quite possible that it was the publication of Hall's anti-Rome polemic *The Olde Religion* (in 1628)<sup>68</sup> and the controversy surrounding it, and/or the debates of this time as to whether the Church of Rome might in some sense be deemed a true church, that occasioned Nathaniel Field's republication in 1628 of his father's *Of the Church*, together with Field's later revisions to Book 3 and the Appendix to Book 3.<sup>69</sup> However, there is no documentary evidence of this that I can find, although the republication of Field almost certainly post-dated the first 1628 edition of *The Olde Religion*, as this was entered into the stationers' register on 21 November 1627.<sup>70</sup> Field himself would have been adamant that Tridentine Rome cannot be considered a true church in any sense, on account of its post-Reformation pertinacity. *The Olde Religion*, as Milton observes, caused within the protestant fold 'controversy between puritans and conforming Calvinists', on account of careless use of the term 'true' applied to the Church of Rome. The controversy elicited responses and defences, and I suggest, tentatively, that Nathaniel's purpose in publishing *Of the Church* 1628 second and augmented edition may have been expressly to bring his father's voice to the fray.

### 2.3 G14467, the British Library copy of *Some Short Memorials*

It is not my intention to give a comprehensive and detailed analysis of *Memorials*. Biographical information for its own sake, where it does not bear upon my objective of introducing Field (the person, churchman, scholar) and his life-mission, is not the prime object of this study. However, much data provided by Nathaniel and others does bear significantly upon my aim, and much of this has been analysed above. But even more significantly, in the British Library, shelf mark G14467,<sup>71</sup> there is one unique instance of *Memorials* worthy of notice. It is a specially bound copy, produced by

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>67</sup> ODNB entry on Hall.

<sup>68</sup> Joseph Hall, *The Olde Religion a Treatise, wherein is laid downe the true state of the difference betwixt the Reformed, and Romane Church* [...] (London: 1628).

<sup>69</sup> Richard Field, *Of the Church* (Oxford: 1628), 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, with dedication to George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, and including revisions by Field to Book 3 and to the Appendix to Book 3.

<sup>70</sup> *Transcript of the Registers of the Company of Stationers. 1554-1640 A.D.*, ed. by Edward Arber, 5 vols (London: privately printed, 1875-7), (1877), 153; this transcribes the entry in the original manuscript, iv, 189. I have been unable to ascertain exactly when during 1628 Nathaniel Field re-published his father's work.

<sup>71</sup> This is how I shall refer to this unique copy henceforth. The British Library in fact holds a number of other copies of *Memorials* as well as G14467.

the publisher le Nève himself, in which many blank leaves have been bound together with the printed sheets, interleaved for the purpose of adding manuscript notes. The paper used appears to be the same, except that the chain lines are at right angles to those of the printed sheets. On these blank sheets le Nève made many insertions in manuscript, most of them purporting to be a transcription of manuscript paragraphs and notes by Nathaniel Field, which the latter had not finally intended for inclusion in the printed work. Subsequently, another hand, White Kennett's, has added a number of further annotations; and a later, third, hand has added one subsequent note. The following paragraphs give an account of these insertions by Nathaniel and annotations by Kennett; I have alluded to some of them already in this chapter. The great importance of this unique copy lies in the fact that it provides a substantial number of additional biographical details, some of which have been incorporated into the subsequent biographies (including the most recent one, my *ODNB* entry). But additionally, we can infer some (admittedly sometimes arguable) conclusions concerning Field's character – see later. Most of the manuscript insertions are written by le Nève himself in a neat, consistent hand, though with a few writing errors, duly corrected. The second hand is that of White Kennett, the dean of Peterborough. White Kennett, to whom le Nève dedicated the published work, owned this copy, presumably early on, for his signature appears on the title page. Perhaps le Nève produced this unique copy specially for Kennett. The handwriting of this signature and his annotations has been verified by myself as being Kennett's, in comparison with letters written by Kennett in the Lansdown collection of manuscripts in the British Library.

Inside the front board of G14467, on the paste-down, is a small embossed oval seal, about 4cm x 3cm, bearing a coat of arms in the centre and, around the edge, the printed text, 'R<sup>T</sup> HON<sup>BLE</sup> THO<sup>S</sup> Grenville'. This is Thomas Grenville (1755-1846), British politician and bibliophile,<sup>72</sup> son of Prime Minister George Grenville. G14467 is available for study now because he bequeathed his collection to the British Museum (of which he had become a trustee in 1830) and it is now housed in the King's Library Tower in the British Library.<sup>73</sup>

Opposite the paste-down is written in the third (untidy) hand mentioned above, 'This Copy has been used in a new Edition of the Biographia Brit[annica] Nov. 1794', the only annotation from this hand. This could possibly be Grenville's hand, but it is more likely perhaps the hand of 'Mr. Gough, in whose possession it [G14467] was', as recorded by Chalmers in his entry on Field in *The General Biographical Dictionary*.<sup>74</sup> The original edition of *Biographia Britannica* (1747-1766)<sup>75</sup> did not have an

<sup>72</sup> He began collecting books from at least his early twenties, and by his death had amassed over 20,000 volumes.

<sup>73</sup> Barry Taylor, 'Thomas Grenville (1755-1846) and His Books', in Giles Mandelbrote and Barry Taylor, *Libraries within the Library: the Origins of the British Library's Printed Collections* (London: The British Library, 2009), 321-340.

<sup>74</sup> Alexander Chalmers, F.S.A. (1759-1834), *The General Biographical Dictionary [...] a New Edition, Revised and Enlarged* (London: 1812-17), xiv (1814), 279-283.

<sup>75</sup> William Oldys, (ed.), *Biographia Britannica*, 6 volumes (London: 1747-1766).

entry on Field. A new edition by Andrew Kippis was begun (1778-1793) but volume vi,<sup>76</sup> containing the entry on Field, was prepared and printed only in part, and all but three copies were subsequently lost in a fire in 1808, before formal publication.<sup>77</sup> According to Chalmers, his life of Field transcribes, 'with a very few omissions', Gough's life of Field in *Biographia Britannica*, vi, and Chalmers repeats the datum that Gough drew up his life of Field 'from a copy of it [*Memorials*] interleaved with MS notes by the author, and by bishop Kennet' – i.e. our G14467. This Gough was the antiquarian Richard Gough, FRS, FSA, 1735-1809, whom we know was associated with Kippis' work. Although Kippis was charged with excessive length and wordiness, with being over-laudatory, and with an overall bias towards nonconformist lives (he was a presbyterian),<sup>78</sup> the same cannot be said of Gough; and Field, included by Kippis, was certainly not in the nonconformist category. It is quite possible that the collector Grenville acquired this copy of *Memorials* from Gough when his library was sold in 1808.<sup>79</sup> All remaining manuscript insertions in G14467 are from nearly a century earlier in the (tidy) hand of le Nève or in the (untidy) hand of White Kennett. The net value of these observations is that it is to *Memorials*, and to G14467 in particular, that all lives of Field are indebted after Wood's, including Hooper's entry in the *DNB*.

## 2.4 Le Nève's Insertions

I now discuss John le Nève's own insertions which transcribed data not ultimately intended for publication by Nathaniel, which are many, and for which purpose the additional blank pages were inserted. He explains in the very first the difference between the 'foul draught' and the 'fair copy' of *Memorials* in the papers acquired from Peter le Nève, both in Nathaniel Field's hand.<sup>80</sup> The former included some paragraphs omitted from the latter for unknown reasons, and it is these he now

<sup>76</sup> Alphabetic range of this volume: Fe-Fo.

<sup>77</sup> Andrew Kippis, (ed.), *Biographia Britannica*, 5 volumes extant (Aa-Fa) (London: 1747-1766); Donald W. Nichol, 'Biographia Britannica', in Steven Serafin, *Eighteenth Century British Literary Biographers*, volume 142 (1994) of *Dictionary of Literary Biography* (Detroit: Gale Research Inc., 1978-), 287-293; See *DNB* entry on Kippis, and see John Nichols, FSA, *Literary Anecdotes of the Eighteenth Century* [...], 9 vols (London: for Nichols, 1812-16), ix (1815), 184n. Bodleian Library has one surviving copy of the first (and only) part of vol. vi of Kippis' *Biographia Britannica*.

<sup>78</sup> The term 'presbyterian' is used somewhat loosely in this study, to denote those clergy or members of the Church of England who long for, and/or bid for, a move towards the institution of a presbyterian polity without bishops. I shall not usually use a capital 'P', save in quotations or titles, as in Field's day there was no such 'denomination' or clearly defined grouping.

<sup>79</sup> *ODNB* entry on Gough. It is also entirely possible that Kennett's copy of *Memorials* went to Gough via James West, President of the Royal Society, also a book collector, who acquired much of Kennett's library on his death. Gough also had possession of a copy of Wood's Latin original of his *Athenae Oxonienses* which Kennett had also made copious annotations in, and this copy is now in the Bodleian Library.

<sup>80</sup> G14467, annotation opposite iii: (Very neat hand, black ink, now faded to a brownish shade) 'Having had an opportunity of comparing the foul draught with the fair copy of the following discourse, I found in the said foul draught, some Paragraphs, which the author (for reasons best known to himself) thought fit to leave out, when he transcribed his fair copy, however, for my own curiosity I thought proper to intersperse the same in the places he seemingly intended them. Feb. 25. 1716--7 John Le Nève'.

includes in his own hand, together with some notes of his own. I shall discuss them where they seem relevant to our study, and note them only briefly (or not at all) where not.

Next, within le Nève's dedication of *Memorials* to White Kennett, at a point where he references Frith's brief 'Account of [Field's] Life',<sup>81</sup> although it is not particularly relevant to those pages, he copies the letter discussed above, written by Nathaniel Field<sup>82</sup> in October 1665 to William Lucy, asking for the latter's approbation for his (Nathaniel's) own intended publication of *Memorials*.

Soon after this, le Nève transcribes a brief note of Nathaniel's, describing an issue that arose at Winchester: 'When he was lecturer at Winchester Exceptions were taken at something which he delivered there in a sermon. But Dr Bilson<sup>[83]</sup> who was then Warden of Winchester College did helpe to vindicate him and knowing his Doctrine to be good sound, did give him great encouragement to go on in his Studies.'<sup>84</sup> Perhaps it is not surprising that Nathaniel omits this datum from the 'fair copy', given the tendency of such putative stains upon a reputation to remain stains in the estimation and on the lips of detractors subsequently. I suggest, then, that Nathaniel's reluctance to include reference to this incident at Winchester occasions the lack of mention of the Winchester appointment altogether. It would be futile to speculate upon the nature of the accusation, but we presume it was at a doctrinal level. Interestingly, Bilson himself was in 1597 embroiled in controversy himself, of national rather than local importance, in response to a sermon of his at Paul's Cross.<sup>85</sup> We note also that Bilson himself produced a defence of the Church of England, *The Perpetual*

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<sup>81</sup> *Memorials*, v-vi.

<sup>82</sup> Opposite vi: 'To the Right Honourable, and Right Reverend Father in God William Lord B. of St. David. These present with my humble service. Right R[.], I have made a Collection of some short memorials concerning my Fathers Life which whether it will be fit for me to publish or no I know not. Before I do any thing I shall consult with better Iudgements then my owne and afterwards proceede accordingly Sometimes I think that unlesse I could say more it were better for me to be silent altogether and to say nothing at all, and sometimes againe I am of opinion that I ought not to deprive the world of so much as I am able to say though it be but little. I shall have occasion to speak of your worthy Grandfather [Sir Richard Kingsmill, MP, Lucy's maternal grandfather – his daughter Constance Kingsmill, was the second wife of William's father, Sir Thomas Lucy of Charlecote] as my Fathers first and best Patron, and therefore that I may not commit any mistake I desire to be rectified by your Ldp. If in any thing I erre from the truth in what hath Relation unto him. I have sent you a Copie of so much as I thinke to write concerning him, if you please to honour me so far as to returne any answere unto these my rude lines and send it unto your son at Castle=Carew he hath promised to Conveigh unto me. And if you can impart any thing concerning my Father which it may be fit for me to publish unto the world you shall thereby very much adde unto that obligation wherein I am already bound to be. Your Lordships most humble servant N.F. Stourton Octob. 1665'.

<sup>83</sup> Thomas Bilson, 1546/7-1616, DD 1581, Warden Winchester College 1581-1596, Bishop of Winchester 1597-1616. Bilson proceeded to a renowned career as a leading bishop and defender of the established church, which won him the favour of Elizabeth I. He became bishop of Worcester 1596, then Winchester 1597 until his death in June 1616 a few months before Field. He preached the sermon at James' coronation in 1603, and became a royal courtier. He wrote *The True Difference* [...] against the Jesuits in 1585, and *The Perpetual Government of Christ's Church*, defending episcopacy, and against the presbyterians, in 1593. Significantly, Bilson was one of the bishops representing the Church of England at the Hampton Court conference in January 1604; Bilson and Richard Bancroft, bishop of London, soon archbishop of Canterbury, begged James, reputedly on bended knee, not to change anything of Church of England polity.

<sup>84</sup> G14467, annotation opposite viii.

<sup>85</sup> Bilson defended himself in *The effect of certaine sermons* [...] (London: 1599). The sermon was not allowed to be published for fear of creating unnecessary scandal. See *ODNB* entry on Bilson.

*Government of Christes Church* in 1593.<sup>86</sup> This clearly antedates both Hooker's and Field's ecclesiological works, and perhaps partly inspired them. I will note the relationship between these later. It should be noted that we do not know why Field left Oxford, save only that he was appointed to this Winchester Cathedral lectureship (which, incidentally, Winchester Cathedral has no record of), sometime shortly after he graduated BD in 1592. Nor do we know by what solicitations he received this appointment.<sup>87</sup> For one with his attested reputation and value (as lecturer and disputant) at Oxford, it is surprising perhaps that he did not remain at least until he graduated DD. And when he did graduate DD later, in 1596, that he did so at Queen's College and not Magdalen Hall is unexplained (though such a transfer of allegiance was not in itself unusual). Given the issue at Winchester when 'exceptions' were taken, do we wonder if life at Oxford had suffered a similar setback, occasioning his leaving the university?

The next insertion notes Field as a preacher in Oxford: 'He was a frequent Preacher while he lived in Oxford [presumably he is referring to Field's puritan lectureship, preaching fortnightly at Carfax], and [...] was a great means to hinder the increase of nonconformists in that universitie, did much help to discountenance and to Convince those which were that way given.' In this study I have emphasised that Field's over-riding concern in his written work is to defend the Church of England against Rome, and that, unlike Bilson and Hooker, he gives minimal attention to the nonconformists. Nonetheless, where he does so do, it is clear, as is reflected in this insertion, that Field holds the same disapproval of nonconformity. It is ironic, therefore, that at Oxford Field was appointed to a puritan lectureship.<sup>88</sup> It is also ironic that Field was thought to belong to the puritan faction at the beginning of the Hampton Court Conference: he was said to have 'entered with them [the Puritans], but only spoke once, and that altogether against them'. Thus we also note the ironies that John Reynolds, one of the Puritan delegation, had been one of his greatest admirers in Oxford; and that his patron Richard Kingsmill himself had, with the Kingsmill family generally, puritan inclinations. If, as Nathaniel avers, Field's negative opinion of non-conformity dated back to his Oxford days, then it is testimony to the degree of his friends' admiration that this survived the censure of his conformist views. Clearly Field had failed 'to discountenance and to convince' Reynolds.

A substantial proportion of the remainder of the manuscript insertions concern family or personal matters, which would not concern us here save that they give some insight into the personalities of

<sup>86</sup> Thomas Bilson, *The Perpetual Government of Christes Church* (London: 1593). Also of note: *The True Difference betweene Christian Subjection and Unchristian Rebellion* (Oxford: 1585).

<sup>87</sup> I have not found any connection between Field and either the then dean, Martin Heton or Thomas Cooper, the then bishop, save the circumstantial one that they had both been at Oxford.

<sup>88</sup> See Paul Seaver, *The Puritan Lectureships: Politics of Religious Dissent, 1560-1662* (Stanford University Press: 1970), 112, for reference to Field's appointment to the Carfax lectureship, and the whole work for an account of the lectureships generally. Nathaniel notes Field's appointment at *Memorials*, 11.



Field and some of his family. For example, we learn that whilst at Oxford, Field's father had provided 'a wife for him',<sup>89</sup> but that the would-be wife had made a condition that he be not a divine. He chose to remain unmarried at Oxford. The significance of this is that Nathaniel tells us that, back in Oxford, 'he was received with a great deale of Joy by his friends' – further testimony to the regard in which they held him, echoed again by the admiring son: 'fitted with extraordinarie parts for that holy calling'.

At a more subjective level, a number of insertions offer a window into Nathaniel's affections, revealing a sentimental character but also depicting a tender closeness within the Field family – though whether such subjectivity can be counted as a contribution to objective evidence is more debatable. For example, in *Memorials*, Nathaniel records the death of his mother – especially 'tender moments' following her being taken terminally ill, extravagantly recounted at some length.<sup>90</sup> But in four insertions to these pages he amplifies the account considerably, recording such as that she 'herself brake out into many pious and devout ejaculations expressing her true and unfained repentance and that christian hope which was in her', and a lot more besides, including a charge to her son John that he should continue in the fear of God.<sup>91</sup> In yet another such insertion, he further tells us of how Field's second wife, the widow of Dr John Spenser (herself widowed again very shortly after marrying Field), had been a good mother after Field's death (he expatiates), and had introduced him, Nathaniel, to his own much-beloved late wife (he expatiates again).<sup>92</sup> All in all, we have a testimony, albeit from a not disinterested party, of the close-knit and personable Field family.

A further insertion records the alleged friendship between Field and Hooker,<sup>93</sup> but it remains highly uncertain as to how such a friendship could have developed without considerable time being spent

<sup>89</sup> G14467, annotation opposite 4. 'After he had spent some years in Oxford his father had provided a wife for him as being his Eldest son and willing to see him well settled in the World. But when the match was almost concluded the partie whom he should have married would needs condition with him that he must not be a Divine. Whereupon he whom God had fitted with so extraordinarie parts for that holy calling and had now begun to devote himselfe that way not willing to be taken off from his well grounded resolutions by so unreasonable a demand resolved to breake off the match and to Returne againe unto the Universitie where he was received with a great deale of Ioy by his freinds and acquaintance who feared that they might have lost him upon the occasion and afterwards for that time laying aside all thoughts of marrieing followed his Studies more closely then before'.

<sup>90</sup> *Memorials*, 18-19. The passage is: 'Something above 2 Yeares before he died it pleased God to take from him [Field] his Wife, whom as he had just cause he dearely loved. Shee died in the Yeare 1614. In her last Speech unto him, when shee tooke her Farewell of him, Shee professes her conceipt of his Worthines, and how much shee was blessed of God in him, and the due respect shee ever had unto him, hoping that in the whole Course of the time shee lived with him, there had never bin found any grosse Omissions or neglect of Dutie. Whereunto his Answer being such, as gave due Testimonie of her singular Vertue, and his Sorrowe for so great a Losse as he then feared, shee cearefully sayd unto him, Let us not part in Sorrow. Shee then gave some good Instructions unto her eldest Son, who was present with her, and prayed for the rest of her Children which were absent, and soone after piously and devoutly ended her Life, leaving her Husband full of Heavines for so great a Losse.'

<sup>91</sup> G14467, annotations on and opposite 18, 19.

<sup>92</sup> Rachel King, daughter of Nathaniel's predecessor at Stourton. She died 1664, and Nathaniel is clearly therefore writing *Memorials* subsequent to this.

<sup>93</sup> G14467, annotation opposite 20.

by them together in the same arena . This is unlikely, given the course of their respective lives, though Nathaniel suggests the common factor of Spenser.<sup>94</sup> Another insertion details a touching incident in which Field sent a 'thank-you' present to Henry Neville, but Neville wanted to decline it because it was he, Neville, who was the debtor, for 'to enjoy his [Field's] Company sometimes and to Conferre with him about points of Divinitie' was thanks enough.<sup>95</sup> Field's life at Windsor each winter is also noted by Nathaniel. After a general comment about the close-knit community there, in another insertion, there is yet further testimony to the value in which Field's learning and discourse was valued by many, especially 'those which were eminent for Learning'.<sup>96</sup> In the published *Memorials* itself Nathaniel remarks that when 'some of more eminent Note for Learning then Ordinarie were made Prebendaries of Windsor, he rejoiced very much thereat, as taking great delight in the Companie of Scholars'.<sup>97</sup> I shall comment later about Field's love of the company of scholars.

One broad and important category of Nathaniel's extra manuscript material, transcribed by le Nève, remains to be considered. Nathaniel is at pains, both in the published *Memorials* and in the G14467 insertions, to portray Field as a man of peace: 'He was one which laboured to heale', and 'His Desires, his Praiers, his Endeavours were for peace, to make up the Breaches of the Church, not to widen Differences but to compose them'.<sup>98</sup> There is corroboration of this in the datum, provided only by Nathaniel Field, that 'King James [...] had once a purpose of sending him into Germanie for the Composing of the Differences between the Lutherans and the Calvinists, many of them being such as might be Composed if Men would but rightly understand one another'.<sup>99</sup> Although we know this plan did not come to fruition, it is consistent with what we know of Field's dislike of controversy within the protestant church. We see this clearly stated within his *Of the Church*, and Nathaniel records these words of Field to a Dr Bostock, concerning the Calvinism-Arminianism 'disputes': 'You [...] may live to see great troubles in the Church of England, occasioned by these Disputes [...] They are Disputes which have troubled the Peace of the Church above 900 Yeares allreadie, and will now not be ended'.<sup>100</sup>

<sup>94</sup> I comment further on the alleged Hooker/Field friendship in the next chapter.

<sup>95</sup> G14467, annotation opposite 12.

<sup>96</sup> G14467, annotation opposite 11. Nathaniel writes of Windsor: '[...] The Prebendaries houses in his time were all close together, 12 within the compasse of one Cloyster and the Deans adjoyning to them. So that whatsoever the weather was they had the opportunitie of conversing together [...] In his latter time his house was commonly the place where many of them did use to meete especially of those which were eminent for Learning where for the most part he entertained much of the time with discourses about Divinitie about Ecclesiasticall Historie, the affairs of the church, and stated the questions which are now on foot in severall parts of Christendome betweene Protestants and Papists, Lutherans and Calvinists, the Greeke church and the Latine, where all hearkened unto him with great attention, and reaped as much benefit thereby as if they had heard a Divinitie Lecture'.

<sup>97</sup> *Memorials*, 12.

<sup>98</sup> *Memorials*, 22-23.

<sup>99</sup> *Memorials*, 15.

<sup>100</sup> *Memorials*, 22.

The context of this is that Field had attended the Oxford Act, and had heard Robert Abbot, then Regius Professor of Divinity, lecturing against Arminianism, probably in 1613 when Abbot 'first began to read upon those [...] Arminian Points.'<sup>101</sup> Nathaniel declares his father to have been 'very much offended', and made the comment to Bostock. These disputes 'have troubled the Peace of the Church above 900 Yeares allreadie, and will not now be ended',<sup>102</sup> Field told Bostock. Field's sensitivities here are seen throughout his writings not only regarding the debate between Arminianism and Calvinism, but also between Calvinism and Lutheranism and, in an earlier century, the great schism between East and West. I have shown elsewhere in this study how, in a meticulously argued and comprehensive chapter, Field demonstrates that the differences between the churches of the East and the protestant churches of the West are not so great as to amount to a salvation issue.

Field's peace-making propensities are a notable theme in Nathaniel's picture of his father; thus: 'he was able to penetrate into the most subtle and intricate Disputes, and yet he did not make use of his Parts for the increasing of Controversies, but rather for the Composing of them'.<sup>103</sup> To the same end we observe the unfinished (indeed barely started) project that Field had embarked upon when he died, namely a new piece of writing intending to address what he sees as unnecessary divisiveness arising, on his view, out of misunderstanding. This work which he had begun, but for which he had written just part of a preface, was to be entitled 'A view of the Controversies in Religion, which in these last Times have caused the lamentable Divisions of the Christian World'.<sup>104</sup> It is clear on reading the incomplete preface that this new work was not intended to be simply a reworking of Field's polemical rejection of Rome, but would rather address the lamentable tendency within all of Christendom to divide unnecessarily over doctrinal issues which could readily be resolved by greater understanding, rather than exacerbated by contention.

Field 'maintained that there is no reall difference between the Lutherans and the Calvinists a point which he hath delivered also in his writings – mistakes [and] misapprehensions[;] either side is apt to charge the other with those things which it doth not hold. How many differences might easily be composed if men were truly lovers of peace. 2 armies drawne out into the field supposing themselves Enemies when indeede friends',<sup>105</sup> writes Nathaniel in another of le Nève's insertions, taking up Field's own unifying cause as his own too. It must be emphasised that Field genuinely holds

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.* Abbot lectured against Arminianism at the Oxford Act from 1613 to 1615. It is not unlikely Field was present on all three occasions.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>103</sup> *Memorials*, 21.

<sup>104</sup> *Memorials*, 23.

<sup>105</sup> G14467, annotation opposite 10.

this view that there be no real difference, not, at least, in matters touching salvation – that is to say, we cannot impute to him a mere ‘cover up’ for the sake of apparent peace, for Nathaniel notes that for Field, the ‘opinions wherein the Calvinists and Arminians or rather Lutherans who of late have bin so much condemned by some under the notion of Arminians he thought to be such as did not so nearly concerne the salvation of our soules as some imagine he thought that men might be saved in either opinion that a man might hold the opinions of either side without endangering the salvation of his soule’.<sup>106</sup>

We should admit some doubt, here, as to exactly how Nathaniel understands the terms ‘Lutheran’ and ‘Arminian’, and we need some idea as to why he (almost) equated the terms. It is unlikely that he would be thinking of the historic German Lutherans holding Luther’s doctrine of the bondage of the will, his predestinarian belief, his evangelical doctrine of justification by faith alone, and his adamant view on the real presence; Field’s putative mission into Germany mentioned above would have been to ‘compose the differences’ between this Lutheranism and continental Calvinism (which, apart from the matter of church government, was doctrinally the same as mainstream conformist Anglicanism in late Elizabethan England). As mentioned above, and as analysed in great detail by Dawn in his doctoral thesis, Field held that the differences between these two sides amounted to ‘mistaking one another’, and he felt that rightly understanding one another could (ideally) resolve the differences.<sup>107</sup>

In the previous quotation above, concerning Abbot’s lecture against continental Arminianism, and Field’s response, the question arises as to why Field was so troubled. Dawn’s conclusion about Field’s theology is that he was definitely not ambivalent or unplaceable on the Calvinism-Arminianism spectrum. Field is unequivocally a moderate double-predestinarian Calvinist, whilst not emphasising reprobation, perhaps in line with his general eirenicism.<sup>108</sup> Dawn’s answer is to suggest that Nathaniel, in the light of his own sensitivities and theological position, may have invented the Bostock incident in order to make Field say after his time what he was unlikely to have said in his lifetime. This is not impossible, though speculative. My preferred solution, but also speculative, is to suggest that it is Field’s heart rather than his mind that is troubled here. He is, I suggest, troubled by the aggressive and divisive tone of Abbot’s lectures (‘effusions’, as Tyacke calls them)<sup>109</sup> and its predisposition to cause disunity within the Calvinist camp. If Field believed that Calvinism and Lutheranism can be reconciled on, were it achievable, clear mutual understanding, then despite the

<sup>106</sup> G14467, annotation opposite 23.

<sup>107</sup> See, e.g., (3.1/i.151).

<sup>108</sup> See further at section 11.3 below.

<sup>109</sup> Nicholas Tyacke, *Aspects of English Protestantism*, 226. See also 270-271 for an account of these disputes at and beyond the yearly Oxford Acts from 1613 onwards.

doctrinal differences which Dawn demonstrates between Field and other divines such as Hooker and Andrewes (nearer to Arminianism than Field) and Perkins (in the other direction), differences occasioned by their 'mistaking one another', then he must have believed also that the positions of all four of those divines can be reconciled similarly; but this is unlikely to happen if Abbot and others (and there were others progressively in the years ahead) are stirring, magnifying the differences rather than, as Field felt was possible, bridging the gap.

It is likely that Nathaniel's own sensitivities are driven by his recollection of the rise of Arminianism—so-called in England in the last years of James' reign and throughout the ill-fated reign of Charles I. Field himself died whilst such incipient 'Arminianism' was in its infancy, but Nathaniel was writing in the aftermath of the Civil War and the Restoration, and would have been only too aware of the controversies and consequent bloodshed that had happened since his father's death. By the time of the Restoration, *some* continental Lutheranism had begun to weaken its adherence to Luther's 'bondage of the will', and consequently had moved closer to the Remonstrants' Arminianism, and the terms Lutheranism and Arminianism were merging in certain minds' eyes. It appears at least that Nathaniel, possibly with tendencies in the direction of the 'Arminian' position himself given those comments of his that we are considering in his annotations and in *Memorials*, felt that his father too had become more sympathetic to the positions later occupied by Laud, at least towards the end of his life. Later I shall note Nathaniel's view, stated within the previous-mentioned annotation, that 'In the differences between the Lutherans and the Calvinists he rather inclined to the Lutherans than the Calvinists especially in his latter time'.<sup>110</sup> Nathaniel proceeds in this annotation with a comment (in Latin – it is not clear whether these are his words, or a quotation) that the tension between 'grace' and 'free-will' cannot be reconciled 'in this life'. Surely Field would not have agreed – these positions are reconcilable by right understanding.

Nathaniel continues to rehearse his own sadness by lamenting that 'factious people [...] have already made as many new articles of faith as the Councell of Trent and are every day ready to make more whatsoever they opine they would have others beleeve as Articles of faith'.<sup>111</sup> Here he has in mind not papists, but protestants, a house divided against itself he clearly feels, and he proceeds to name William Perkins, a double-predestinarian certainly more 'Reformed' than most divines of his and Field's days, and who does stress reprobation, *contra* Field, and his (Perkins') '6 principles'.

<sup>110</sup> G14467, annotation opposite 23.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*

## 2.5 The Question of the Trustworthiness of *Memorials*

It has been suggested that the generally highly admiring tone of *Memorials* may not only reflect the duty that a loyal son might consider he owes his father, but might also reflect the very nature of biographies generally in this era. For example, Dawn analyses Nathaniel's biography against a modern assessment of admiring biographies, Martin's *Walton's Lives*,<sup>112</sup> and shows how *Memorials* satisfies a variety of characteristics common to the genre. Dawn shows how Martin names characteristics of the subject of a typical biography such as his education, modesty, lack of ambition, humility, family loyalty, a 'good death', etc. Examples pertaining to Field, in Dawn's analysis, include the pastoral abilities of the biography's subject (as noted above) and the subject's preferring a retired and studious life in the country, in respect of which Dawn notes both Richard Hooker and Field as being examples. Thus Nathaniel notes, 'After my Father was settled at Burroughcleare, he had the offer of the Parsonage of *St. Andrewes in Holborne*, a Place of greater Valew, and more in the Way of Preferment, but he chose rather to continue where he was, as liking better a more retired Life, where he might with more Freedome serve God and follow his Studies.'<sup>113</sup> Likewise Hooker also retired to the country, in his case to escape the controversy attending his dispute with Travers during his mastership of the Temple. Dawn's analysis is impressive and thorough, and I do not demur from it; he painstakingly measures Nathaniel's biography against a list of features seen to be common to many admiring biographies of the era, and finds that *Memorials* is no exception.

I agree that a dutiful son writing admiringly of his father will naturally err in the direction of sycophancy, and it is no surprise that this biography follows a well-attested pattern. Nonetheless, admiration does not necessarily imply falsification, even if we allow for some measure of exaggeration. After all, regarding the above quotation, we know Field did refuse St Andrews (it was vacant at the time, after its double-beneficed incumbent Richard Bancroft (the future archbishop) was made bishop of London in 1597; the future bishop of London, John King, was appointed to St Andrews after Field declined it. And Field did remain at Burghclere, spending at least the summers there, instead of residing only at Windsor (where he did have a house supplied)<sup>114</sup> and neglecting Burghclere. We know that Field certainly did not neglect his preaching duties at Burghclere whilst resident there, for we are told that both Richard and William Kingsmill 'were his constant Auditors every Sunday'.<sup>115</sup> Other of Field's qualities cannot be gainsaid, as variously argued in this study – for example, his humility (e.g., he only ever published one sermon); the regard in which others held him – as well-attested already in the account above, well beyond the witness of *Memorials*; his pastoral

<sup>112</sup> Jessica Martin, *Walton's Lives* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001). Dawn discusses this in his chapter 7.

<sup>113</sup> *Memorials*, 5.

<sup>114</sup> See earlier footnote in this chapter, referencing 'G14467, annotation opposite 11'.

<sup>115</sup> *Memorials*, 5.

heart (e.g., towards Richard Kingsmill); and his fame in disputation at Oxford – thus, Nathaniel's 'He was in his Time best Disputant in Oxford, [...] everyone did acknowledge him to be so [...], and many [...] would follow after to heare him'<sup>116</sup> is amply echoed by Frith, as we have seen.

In general, if we disallow flattering testimony of the revered characters of history by their admirers, then we render a vast wealth of historical data unreliable. A wise reader will make allowance for exaggeration and assess the biographical information accordingly, without entire rejection of the positive views expressed of the biography's subject. In *Memorials'* case, as noted above, especially considering the additional material in G14467, a sufficient proportion of Nathaniel's testimony is either attested elsewhere (such as in Frith's independently admiring biographical pen-picture<sup>117</sup> or in Hall's<sup>118</sup> own autobiography quoted by Nathaniel)<sup>119</sup> or is deducible from the nature of Field's writings, as Nathaniel himself avers.<sup>120</sup>

The latter (the witness of Field's writings themselves) concerns Field's memory. Nathaniel attests, 'He had a great Memorie; any Booke which he read, he was able to carrie away the Substance of it in his Memorie, and to give an account of all the materiall Passages therein. His Memorie was great, but his Judgment was greater [...].'<sup>121</sup> This cannot be deemed other than fully true to a remarkable degree, on reading Field's works. It would be difficult, I aver, to find his equal in his command of so many hundreds of authors through all of Christian history, and his ability to retrieve from his memory and quote (albeit often not verbatim but translated by him from the Latin) what they had written. Dawn suggests the existence of a commonplace book; this is not impossible, but it would have to be a sizeable volume: Field's command of one and a half millennia of theological writing is astonishing by any measure. His 'judgment' I take to refer to his ability to analyse and assess the arguments of others, which is also abundantly evident from his writings – Field will not let a non-sequitur, and he

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<sup>116</sup> *Memorials*, 3.

<sup>117</sup> See earlier in this chapter.

<sup>118</sup> Joseph Hall, DD, 1574-1656, Bishop of Exeter then Norwich, Calvinist and apologist for the Church of England, author of, as relevant for our study among others: *Via media, The Way of Peace* (1619), regarding his renowned peacemaking energies towards reconciling the Arminians and the protestants; and *The Olde Religion* (1628), concerning the differences between the Churches of Rome and of England.

<sup>119</sup> *Memorials*, 17-18: Nathaniel quotes Hall: 'Doctor Field the Learned and worthy Deane of Glocester, [...] that Reverend and better deserving Divine'.

<sup>120</sup> *Memorials*, 56: 'What his Thoughts were in Matters of Religion, he hath in a great Measure expressed in his Writings, which are the best Monuments of his Worth, of his Pietie, his peaceable Inclinations and Disposition. Though he be dead in them he yet liveth, and may he long Live to the Benefit of succeeding Generations'.

<sup>121</sup> *Memorials*, 21. In a final insertion adjacent to the above passage, Nathaniel remarks on Field's own caution to others about realising the fallibility of memory: 'In his latter time perswaded his freinds to commit things to writing as much as might be and not to trust too much unto their memories Wishing that he had been formerly more exact in that kind telling them that them [sic; presumably this word should be deleted] he found that many things were slipt out of his memorie which he thought he never could have forgotten' (G14467, opposite 21).

finds a plethora of them, survive his censure. It is a safer albeit provisional conclusion, I suggest, that Field actually did have an exceedingly impressive memory.

The more objective data in *Memorials*, such as details of Field's qualifications, appointments and key dates, are substantially attested by documentary evidence. For example, Nathaniel transcribes a number of letters to Field, still extant, from government or other officials offering him the positions already mentioned.<sup>122</sup> State papers and the records of Windsor and Lincoln's Inn and many other sources confirm much else. Furthermore, it must be noted that Nathaniel's testimony is internally self-consistent throughout; it references so many other data, involving so many other individuals and corroborating testimony attributed to them, that I cannot conclude that *Memorials* stretches the bounds of credibility to a degree that amounts to a charge of wholesale dissembling. Yes, I admit a degree of touching sycophancy; but making allowances for this, I acknowledge a basically trustworthy account. I concede that Nathaniel does indeed follow the typical pattern noted by Martin; but that he does so deliberately, or knowing he is giving an exaggerated or even deceptive or false account, is by no means so certain. Dawn acknowledges this: without demur he concludes, '[Field] was, simply put, a great man, a man worthy of remembrance and respect'.<sup>123</sup>

## 2.6 White Kennett's annotations

It remains to note Kennett's own annotations in G14467. The next annotation after Gough's single one (as presumed so to be and noted above) is Kennett's signature on the title page, which is closely similar to an almost identical signature appearing on the title page of one instance of another printed sermon, clearly also from Kennett's collection.<sup>124</sup> Beyond this Kennett has made six annotations, some lengthy. Two of them give data which I have been unable to verify either the accuracy of or the relevance of. First, opposite page 1, Kennett notes that in 1566, when Field was not yet five years old, Queen Elizabeth 'appointed her beloved servant John Feyld one of her surgeons'.<sup>125</sup> This can hardly be Field's father John, who was a yeoman smallholder, nor John Field the puritan who is hardly likely to have been regarded as a 'beloved servant' of the queen, and is too young (twenty-two) at

<sup>122</sup> *Memorials*, 7 (re. Field's becoming chaplain to Elizabeth I), 9 (re. Field's summons to the Hampton Court Conference), 14 (re. Field's summons to preach before the king at Windsor), 16 (re. offer of future bishopric of Oxford).

<sup>123</sup> Final words of Dawn, §7.5.3.

<sup>124</sup> Antonie Rudd, DD, *A Sermon Preached at Greenwich Before the Kings Majestie [...] 14. of Iune. 1603*. (London: 1603), title page of a copy from Kennett's collection, reproduced in Jean-Christophe Mayer, ed., *The Struggle for the Succession in Late Elizabethan England* (Montpellier: Université Paul-Valéry, 2004), plate IV. The caption of this plate ascribes this title page as being that of Field's sermon, clearly in error.

<sup>125</sup> My translation of Kennett's Latin. The relevant text is '1566. 8. Eliz. Regina constituit dilectum servientem suum Johan Feyld unum Chirurgorum suum cum feodo X[??] (exact sum unclear) libr. [pounds sterling] durante vita. E.R. apud Westmon. 4. Jul. reg. 8.' [Queen Elizabeth from Westminster, 4 July 1566].



this stage. I have not been able to find any connection between Field and the 'John Feild'<sup>126</sup> who was renowned astrologer to Elizabeth I, to whom Kennett may possibly, even likely, have been referring; nor have I been able to verify the appointment of this latter John Feild as a surgeon to Elizabeth, save only for this: one of the Sloane Manuscripts in the British Library, a 'Treatise on anatomy' according to the 'Catalogue of the Manuscripts', passed on the death of its owner to a 'John Felde', identified as the astrologer.<sup>127</sup> But the identification of the astrologer with the surgeon may owe its origin in these references to previous guesswork.<sup>128</sup> This leaves the conundrum: was Kennett conjecturing here, on the basis of there being several John Fields related to our Field – his father, grandfather, a son, and an otherwise unknown younger brother (baptised 1567) all being John?<sup>129</sup>

Secondly, much later in G14467, Kennett presents us with another conundrum. In his hand, opposite page 58, though with no relevance to that page, Kennett notes 'See A Proclamation for the Search and Apprehension of Hen[r]y Field. 30. May. 21. Jac. 1623'.<sup>130</sup> Again, we have no evidence that this Henry Field is in any way related to Field, save only that he was a park-keeper for James I at Theobalds,<sup>131</sup> not a very great distance from the Field family lands in Hemel Hempstead, Field's birthplace. Henry Field had stolen deer from Theobalds Park, but after his eventual apprehension the case was dropped owing to the influence of court members.<sup>132</sup> Henry Field the deer poacher was in fact bailed in 1623/4 by Sir Thomas Dacres, a supporter of Parliament in the Civil War.<sup>133</sup> My research

<sup>126</sup> Or 'Felde'. *ODNB* entry on John Feild/Felde. See also *The Gentleman's Magazine*, New Series (London: William Pickering, 1834), I (May 1834), 491-7; and *The Gentleman's Magazine*, 3<sup>rd</sup> series (London: Henry and Parker, 1862), XIII, 1862, 604-8; and <http://g4fas.net/JohnField.html> (accessed October 2017).

<sup>127</sup> Manuscript 2463. See Samuel Ayscough, *A Catalogue of the Manuscripts preserved in the British Museum* (London: John Rivington, 1782), II, 644, which records 'Treatise of anatomy. At the end is written, "This booke John Felde must paye xxxxxiiij s iiiij d to my executors," by me Rickarde Ferris', who was 'Master of the Barbers and Surgeons Company in 1563' – see Monica H. Green, *Making Women's Medicine Masculine* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 285. This John Felde has been identified by Monica Green as 'astrologer and associate of John Dee [...] owner of a variety of manuscripts and printed texts on women's diseases'. Thus we have some corroboration that John Felde and John Dee, who were definitely associated with one another (e.g., they were both arrested during the reign of Mary I and charged with casting spells), and who were both astrologers, had surgical interests at least. See also J.W. Ballantyne, 'The "Byrth of Mankynde"' in *The Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology of the British Empire*, vol. x, October 1906, No. 4, reprinted in Philip K. Wilson, (ed.), *Midwifery Theory and Practice* (New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1996), 4. See also <http://www.reproduction.group.cam.ac.uk/the-sekeness-of-wymmen> (accessed October 2017), which references the same data and notes that a principal component of manuscript 2463 is a fifteenth century text 'The Skeness of Wymmen'.

<sup>128</sup> The references quoted do not cite their sources.

<sup>129</sup> The younger brother John's baptism in 1567 is recorded in Hemel Hempstead parish registers for the year. This John is not mentioned in his father's will.

<sup>130</sup> Kennett's full text is: 'See A Proclamation for the Search and Apprehension of Heny [sic] Field. 30. May. 21. Jac. 1623' Rymer XVII 504'. The reference is to Thomas Rymer, *Foedera Conventiones* [...], 2<sup>nd</sup> edn, 20 vols (London: 1704-35), XVII (1727), 503-4. The 3<sup>rd</sup> edn reference is Thomas Rymer, *Foedera Conventiones* [...], 3<sup>rd</sup> edn, 10 vols (Hague: 1739-45), VII (1742), part 4, 70-1, or the 3<sup>rd</sup> edn reprint (Farnborough, Hants: Gregg Press, 1967). The original proclamation as a single sheet printed in Old English Black Letter type is extant at, e.g., EEBO: *By the King. A Proclamation for the search and apprehension of Henry Feild* (London: Norton and Bill, 1623).

<sup>131</sup> Theobalds, now gone, was adjacent to current-day Cheshunt, Hertfordshire.

<sup>132</sup> See, e.g., Doris Jones-Baker, (ed.), *Hertfordshire in History: Papers Presented to Lionel Munby* (Hertfordshire: Hertfordshire Local History Council, 1991), 103, 107. See also PRO SP14/143/18-9; 153/5-7,17; and also Calendar of State Papers Domestic, 1623-5, 86-7.

<sup>133</sup> J.S. Cockburn, (ed.), *Calendar of Assize Records, Hertfordshire Indictments* (London: HMSO), entry 1230.

has not revealed any data that might establish whether, again, Kennett was merely speculating a connection, or whether he knew something we do not as to Henry's belonging to the Hempstead Fields. That Kennett, by these annotations, seems to allege a known connection between Field and, respectively, the above John 'Feyld' and Henry Field (but not the more well-known John Field the puritan) causes us to wonder if he knew more than we can now recover. There is, in fact, a tenuous connection I have discovered between the Field family and John Field the puritan: Thomas Wilcox, who co-wrote *An Admonition to Parliament* with him, was minister at the chapelry of Bovingdon, which in those days was allied with nearby Hemel Hempstead.<sup>134</sup> We can note also that various ministers of Hemel Hempstead<sup>135</sup> of this era were of puritan-presbyterian inclinations (Edward Brocklesby, William Dyke, Richard Gawton, Thomas Taylor). Might this John Field, the puritan, whose origins are currently unknown, belong to the numerous Hertfordshire Fields? If perchance he and Field belong to the same family it would be irony indeed, for Field the churchman would not have been happy with John's variety of puritanism. Escalating the irony, a nephew of Field was a signatory to the Solemn League and Covenant of September 1643.<sup>136</sup> Research continues.

Next, Kennett notes<sup>137</sup> that Field had twice been named as a commissioner, one of many on both occasions, for special commissions of Elizabeth I in 1597 (for 'Ecclesiastical Causes') and James I in 1603 ('to exercise all Spiritual Jurisdiction') both in Winchester Diocese.<sup>138</sup> Field's various subsequent biographies rely on Kennett for these data, although they can also be found in Calendar of State Papers Domestic for the relevant years. Both commissions concern conformity to the Acts of Uniformity. Both specifically note that Field is a doctor of divinity as well as licensed in the diocese, which may furnish adequate explanation for Field being a chosen commissioner – there may be no higher accolade implied.

Kennett references<sup>139</sup> the one published sermon of Field, noted elsewhere in this study. He supplies his own appreciation of the work: 'The sermon has many good observations in it'.<sup>140</sup> He quotes two

<sup>134</sup> Wilcox's daughter, Dorcas, was buried at Hemel Hempstead in 1582.

<sup>135</sup> The town-centre church of St Mary stands to this day.

<sup>136</sup> Elisha Deacon of Hemel Hempstead, son of Thomas Deacon, married to Martha Field, the half-sister of Field. Martha was one of five surviving (out of ten) children born to John Field and his second wife, Grace Turner, whom John married in 1575; John's first wife, Marjorie Gladman, Field's mother, died in 1573.

<sup>137</sup> G14467, annotation opposite 6.

<sup>138</sup> Kennett references these respectively thus: 'E. Regina apud Westmon. X. Octob. reg. 39. 1597. Rymer XVI. 324.' and 'Witness Ourselfe [i.e. James I] at Harfielde 26. Aug. reg. 1. 1603. ib. [i.e. ibid, i.e. Rymer xvi] 550.' i.e., and more accurately, Thomas Rymer, *Foedera Conventiones* [...], 2<sup>nd</sup> edn, 20 vols (London: 1704-35), xvi (1727), 324-5 and 546-51; or 3<sup>rd</sup> edn, 10 vols (Hague: 1739-45), vii (1742), part 1, 194-5 and part 2, 92-7; or reprint (Farnborough, Hants: Gregg Press, 1967). These annotations by Kennett appear opposite *Memorials*, 6, because the timeline of Nathaniel's biography is in the 1590s at this point.

<sup>139</sup> G14467, annotation opposite 13.

<sup>140</sup> After a formal reference to the printed sermon, 'A learned Sermon preached before the King at Whitehall on Friday 16. of March by M Doctor Field Chaplaine to his Majestie. At London Printed by James Roberts for Geffry Chorlton. 1604. 8vo. Text Jude verse 3.'

passages at length, esteeming 'the holy library of the church' and lamenting that 'with us [protestants] all these things [academic scholarship in its manifold types] are neglected', respectively.<sup>141</sup> Perhaps it is not surprising that Kennett selects these two passages for praise, given his own scholarship, his collection of books and manuscripts, and his antiquarian interests. What is noteworthy is that Kennett does not comment upon Field's ecclesiology or theology.

At the point in *Memorials* where Field's books are in view, Kennett notes the charge made by the presbyterian Robert Baillie in *The Canterburians Self-conviction*,<sup>142</sup> that the 1628 second edition of Field's *Of the Church* contained material not written by Field, but inserted by Laud or those of his circle. I have not considered this elsewhere in this study, so a brief comment is in order here. Baillie avers the unlikelihood that Field himself was responsible for certain material in 'chap. I' of the Appendix to *Of the Church*, Book 3 (appearing for the first time in 1628 after Field's death, in Nathaniel Field's publication of the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of *Of the Church*). That this was published by Nathaniel is evident from the dedication of this new edition by him to the Duke of Buckingham,<sup>143</sup> and by the fact that it seems, as we have seen, that Field's papers were in the possession of Nathaniel on Field's death. In this 2<sup>nd</sup> edition additional material is included not present in Field's own editions. These additions comprise two re-written chapters of Book 3, and a substantially re-written Appendix to Book 3. Clearly, Field had been working on these revisions at the time of his death, and left them to Nathaniel unpublished.

<sup>141</sup> The quotations are transcriptions of *Sermon*: 'p. 10', i.e. Sig. A7<sup>v</sup>, 'no treasure [...] make it too plain[e]'; and '[p.]26', i.e. 'Sig. B7<sup>v</sup>', but actually Sig. B8, 'In our times [...] of an evill cause'.

<sup>142</sup> G14467, annotation opposite 20. Kennett quotes the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition: Robert Baillie, *Ladensium Autokatakrisis, The Canterburians Self-Conviction* [...], 3<sup>rd</sup> edn with Supplement (London: for Nathaniel Butter, 1641), 102-104. 2<sup>nd</sup> edn is same but without the supplement. 1<sup>st</sup> edn is ([Amsterdam]: written in March, printed in April 1640), 100-102. The passage referred to is (after observing that the 'Canterburians' (i.e. Archbishop William Laud and his circle) have reinstated material from the Offertory, the Canon and the Communion sections of the Missal previously expunged by the Reformers, and having dealt with the popish errors of the offertory): 'The piece which followes the Offertorie in the Missall, and in our booke also, is the Canon, no lesse detested by all Protestants, then admired by papists, as Bellarmine telleth us; Many of the prefaces and prayers thereof wee have word by word, and what ever we want, these men in print are bold to justifie it all, as in nothing opposite to the truth or protestant Doctrine: So the appendix to D. Fields third Booke, chap. I. But wee must consider the time wherein D. Field is made to utter such speeches, it is in the twenty eight yeare [1628], long after the death of that learned and reverend Divine: it is in that yeare when his Grace [Abp. Laud] sitting in the Chaire of London, had gotten now the full superintendence of all the presses there, and could very easily (for the promoting of his designes) put in practice that piece of policie among others, to make men after their death speak in print, what they never thought in their life; or at least to speake out those thoughts which for the good and peace of the Church, they keepest close within the doors of their owne breast, and withdrew from the notice of the World; it would then seeme reason to father these strange justifications of the Masse, which are cast to Fields booke so long after his death, as also many passages in these posthume works of Andrewes, which his Grace avowedly sets out in the twentie ninth yeare, and those new pieces never heard of, which in the thirtie one yeare are set out by M. Aylward, under the name of the English Martyrs, as also that writ of Overall, which Montagu puts out with his owne amplifications, in the thirty six yeare: These and the like pieces, must in reason be rather father'd on those who put them forth, then upon their pretended authors, who readily did never know such posthume children, or else did take them for such unhappy bastards as they were resolved, for reasons known to themselves to keep them in obscurity, and never in publike to avow them as their owne.'

<sup>143</sup> Repeated in the 1635 third edition, even though Buckingham was assassinated in 1628.

By 'chap. I'<sup>144</sup> Baillie presumably means, not the denominated chapter 1 of the Appendix, concerning the 'Canon of the Scriptures', as this does not contain material likely to offend Baillie; but rather, a long 'Answer' (to John Brereley, a controversialist for the Romanist cause who has responded to Field's first edition of 1606). Field's response appears at the front of Book 3 Appendix before the stated chapter 1. Baillie does not state what passages have offended him, making him conclude that Field the known protestant could not have written them. So it is not easy to speculate exactly why Baillie had thought thus. Clearly he had envisaged Field, being protestant, as allied to his own cause. If so, then this was naïve; the theological spectrum within protestantism was wide enough to encompass the Scot Baillie at one end, and Field somewhat distant. Baillie was clearly unable to conceive of Field as the author of material sympathetic to the later Laudian movement. We need to remember, first, that Field was not sympathetic to the presbyterian cause, and, secondly, that his consuming agenda was to oppose Rome and not the English Church Party, to which he undoubtedly belonged. Further, we have Nathaniel's testimony, discussed above as being not necessarily reliable, that 'he rather inclined to the Lutherans [i.e., the Arminians, in the sense of that term represented by the Laudians later] then<sup>145</sup> the Calvinists, especialy in his latter time'. It is likely that Baillie was mistaking Field's position, therefore, and that the text he found to be 'Laudian' was in fact Field's own, rather less Calvinistic in tone than Baillie would prefer.

We can wonder for what purpose Kennett made all these annotations.<sup>146</sup> This copy of *Memorials* was in his own collection, not apparently destined for wider readership. But then, we know he was an antiquarian for whom the very improvement of the historical record would be sufficient justification. But why conjecture, if the annotations I have noted above as being possibly conjectural were indeed just that?

## 2.7 Summary of the Chapter

I have surveyed a unique annotated instance of Nathaniel Field's *Memorials*, with a view to observing and discussing additional material that the author chose not to include in the published version. We have noted material which bears upon the person of Field and his family, affording a window into his personality not available to us elsewhere. We have reviewed evidence likewise as to the favour in

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<sup>144</sup> See footnote above.

<sup>145</sup> *sic*, = 'than'.

<sup>146</sup> Of less importance for our study, in a final annotation in G14467, opposite 60, Kennett notes Giles Field's memorial tablet in the cloister of New College, Oxford, transcribing the Latin inscription entirely. Here White Kennett cites 'Hist. Antiq. Oxon. Lib. II. col. 155', the original Latin edition of *Antiquitates*, i.e. Anthony Wood, *Historia et Antiquitates Universitatis Oxoniensis* [...] (Oxonii: E. Theatro Sheldoniano, 1674), II, 155.

which Field was held by his contemporaries. We have observed substantial comments by Nathaniel, speaking for Field and probably also for himself, regarding Field's peace-making propensities.

And yet enigmas remain. How, for instance, do we reconcile Field's desire to compose differences with his strident polemic against Rome? Is his belief in the essential compatibility of Lutheranism and Calvinism genuine, or is it a device for making the entire non-Roman world of protestant West and Eastern orthodoxy a united front against his one principal target for his polemic? Yet an element of protestantism seems completely excluded from Field's purview – the separatist tendencies of his era. I shall reflect upon these conundrums in my 'Conclusion', with which I complete this study.

And besides, supposing my complaint of divisions in the Christian world to reach to the breaches that are, and have been, amongst the Professors of the reformed religion, nothing can be inferred from thence contrary to anything that I have written touching the agreeing of these men in judgment and opinion. For there may be great breaches between such men as are of one judgment and opinion upon mistaking one another; and therefore *Gregory Nazianzen* in his Oration made in the praise of *Athanasius*, sheweth that the whole world in a sort was divided upon a mere mistaking, and that *Athanasius* by making either part rightly to understand the other, procured a reconciliation. Neither need this to seem strange; for oftentimes controversies are multiplied, and by ill handling made intricate, that in truth and indeed are no controversies, and might easily be cleared, if there were a due proceeding in the discussing of the same.<sup>147</sup>

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<sup>147</sup> Field, responding to §6 of the second part of Maihew's *Treatise of the Grounds of the Old and New Religion* (5.App.Pt2/iv.499-500).

## Chapter 3

### – Field’s Erudition –

#### 3. Abstract of this chapter

In this chapter I gather together in summary the evidence for Field’s erudition. I adduce new evidence here, but inevitably I sometimes repeat, in brief, some data already examined in order to demonstrate in one place the wealth of material. There is ample testimony to Field’s immense learning both from the witness of his biographers and contemporary and later admirers (and detractors), and from the internal evidence of his own writing, as well as the biographical evidence. I complete this study with a brief conclusion, restating my belief that Field is worthy of renewed scholarship.

#### 3.1 Field’s erudition – the biographical evidence

[Field’s ecclesiastical appointments were] all little enough for the encouragement of so right learned a Man as this our author Dr. Field was, who in his time was esteemed a principal maintainer of Protestancy, a powerful Preacher, a profound Schoolman, exact Disputant, and so admirable well knowing in the Controversies between the Protestants and the Papists, that few or none went beyond him in his time, as it doth plainly appear in these his labours.<sup>1</sup>

The testimony of admirers should not, of course, be accepted uncritically, but there is certainly a wealth of it. All early biographies of Field rely almost exclusively (but not entirely so) on Field’s son Nathaniel’s own life of his father, together with university and other institutional records, with a few items of additional information recorded by others. Pertinent to our study is the observation in these biographies that Field was extraordinarily accomplished in his studies. Even if one were to suspect a certain degree of favourable exaggeration from an admiring son, the testimony of Field’s various academic/lectureship appointments and achievements is arguably still impressive. We have noted that Anthony Wood’s *Athenae Oxonienses*, in its first edition of 1691, predated the publication of Nathaniel Field’s *Memorials* in 1717; the second edition of 1721 postdates it. Wood’s revised account of Field published in 1721 is very heavily dependent on the newly published *Memorials*, but the 1691 edition shows no knowledge at all of Nathaniel’s as yet unpublished writing. And yet Wood’s 1691

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<sup>1</sup> Anthony Wood, *Athenae* (1691), I, 349, entry 432.

*Athenae* itself portrays Field in a very favourable light; in its phraseology it matches Nathaniel's superlative estimation, albeit more briefly. Wood, in his first edition of his *Athenae*, and thus independently of Nathaniel, describes Field as 'so right learned a Man [...] that few or none went beyond him in his time'. So even if one is liable to think of Nathaniel's account as being excessively extravagant in its admiration, he was not alone, and we shall proceed to see shortly that others too most certainly admired Richard Field. Le Nève, for example, the publisher of *Memorials*, writing his 'Dedication' to White Kennett,<sup>2</sup> detects in the work 'an air of sincerity as cannot fail to recommend the Perusal of' Nathaniel's 'Memoirs' and he himself considers that Field's 'Learned Works [...] have so justly render'd his Memory venerable to Posterity'.<sup>3</sup>

Additionally, as examined above, le Nève quotes another antiquarian, Thomas Frith, who knew Field and sang his praises. We have noted that Frith,<sup>4</sup> BD, was a canon of Windsor from 1610,<sup>5</sup> and that he had been a contemporary of Field at Magdalen Hall, Oxford, after the latter had graduated MA and before BD. And we have observed Frith's great admiration for his fellow canon. The importance of Frith's biographical note right here is that, well ahead of Nathaniel, he echoes the latter's admiration of Field. First, having been a one-time auditor of Field's career at Magdalen Hall, he testifies to Field's worth as a disputant and lecturer in Oxford, and notes that he was heard 'with supreme applause'; secondly, clearly aware of Field's writings, he extols Field's *Of the Church* as being 'extremely learned' and the epitome of defences of the Church of England against Rome.<sup>6</sup> Further, as noted and listed above in chapter 2.2, Nathaniel himself quotes a number of divines and other worthies as having a high opinion of Field. Dr Barlow 'much esteemed his Learning and Judgement, ever since he had bin his Auditor in Oxford, at Magdalen Hall and Carfax. Dr Crakanthorp 'longs to conferre again, and often with him'. An unnamed 'able Divine' 'allwayes loaded himselfe with Questions whensoever he went unto him'. An unnamed 'judicious Divine', a canon of Windsor, considered Field 'the most profitable Man that ever he Conversed with in his Life, from whom most was to be learned'.<sup>7</sup> After Field's death, Joseph Hall, in 'his owne Life' lamented the loss of 'the Learned and worthy Deane of Glocester, [...] that Reverend and better deserving Divine'.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>2</sup> The Reverend White Kennett, DD, 1660-1728, Dean of Peterborough, later bishop of Peterborough from 1718, antiquarian, Chaplain in Ordinary to Queen Anne (le Nève erroneously says 'to His Majesty' (*Memorials*, iii)).

<sup>3</sup> *Memorials*, iii.

<sup>4</sup> Thomas Frith, 1569-1631; Magdalen Hall, Oxford, MA (1594); BD All Souls, Oxford, 1605; Canon of Windsor, 1610. See Foster, 536; Wood, *Fasti* (Bliss, 1815), II, 306.

<sup>5</sup> Foster, 536.

<sup>6</sup> My translation of two lines of Frith's pen-picture of Field.

<sup>7</sup> The preceding quotations are from *Memorials*, 11-12.

<sup>8</sup> *Memorials*, 17-18.

We have demonstrated Nathaniel Field's admiration of his father; but high praise for Field is not restricted to Nathaniel's *Memorials*, and we are not dependent on Nathaniel alone for this exalted view, for we have ample evidence that others of Field's era held him in high regard for his erudition, his disputation and preaching abilities, and his character. We noted Hall's testimony at the commencement of chapter 1 above, from a sermon on 1 Corinthians 12:4 which he preached in convocation before Archbishop Abbot, in which he declared: '*Stupor mundi clerus Britannicus*, "The wonder of the world is the Clergy of Britain." So many learned divines, so many eloquent preachers, [...] those great lights of our Church', amongst whom Hall specifically names Field, amongst a catalogue of such worthies ranging from Jewel, through Foxe, Bilson and Hooker, to some of then more recent renown.<sup>9</sup> Likewise Hall names Field, together with a few other notables such as Luther, Calvin, Zanchi, du Plessis, Hooker and Andrewes, as being, together, a 'whole cloud of learned and pious Authors'.<sup>10</sup> We can add that Robert Skinner, bishop of Bristol, in a 1637 visitation article, opined similarly that it would 'wel become young divines' to be 'acquainted with' 'our owne excellent writers; such as Juel, Hooker, Bilson, Field, Andrewes [...] whose lives smell of the lampe of antiquitie'.<sup>11</sup> Faulkner,<sup>12</sup> writing his *An Historical and Descriptive Account* (of Chelsea College) records: 'The king [...] appointed many of the most celebrated divines [...] and it had to boast some of the soundest scholars [...] that the Church of England has seen'.<sup>13</sup> The relevance for our study of Field's appointment as a fellow of Chelsea College is slight, but it does furnishe further testimony to the regard in which Field was held by the king and others. Wood, in his original portrait of Field in the original 1691 edition of his *Athenae* (which is independent of Nathaniel's), having noted Field's career at Oxford, makes his own subjective comment: 'Dr. Field [...] was esteemed a principal Maintainer of Protestancy, a powerful Preacher, a profound Schoolman, exact Disputant, and so admirable well knowing in the Controversies between the Protestants and the Papists, that few or noe went beyond

<sup>9</sup> '[...] fathers and brethren, with an eminent measure of gifts. With what powers of the mind, what singular learning, what powerful eloquence, with how great wisdom, with what gravity, with what titles of honour, with what large dignities! It is a great word, that I shall speak; and yet I must and will say it, without all, either arrogance or flattery, *Stupor mundi clerus Britannicus*, "The wonder of the world is the Clergy of Britain." So many learned divines, so many eloquent preachers, shall in vain be sought elsewhere this day, in whatever region under the cope of heaven. What should I reckon up those great lights of our Church, not long since set; Juels, Humfrys, Foxes, Whitgifts, Fulkcs, Whitakers, Raynolds, Bilsons, Greenams, Babingtons, Eedeses, Hollands, Playfers, Abbotses, Perkinses, Fields, Hookers, Overalls, Willets, Whites, Masons?' (Hall, Joseph, *Noah's Dove, bringing an olive of peace to the tossed ark of Christ's Church*, 'A Sermon, preached in Latin, in the Convocation held in St. Paul's Church, to the Clergy of England' and before George Abbot the archbishop of Canterbury, on 20 February 1623, by Joseph Hall, DD, Dean of Worcester, later bishop of Exeter then Norwich, translated by Hall's son Robert, in *The Works of Joseph Hall, D.D.*, ed. by P. Wynter (Oxford: 1863), x, 29 [or in ditto, ed. by P. Hall (Oxford: 1839), xi, 17; or in ditto, ed. by J. Pratt (London: 1808), v, 145]).

<sup>10</sup> Joseph Hall, *The Reconciler*, 23. This quotation is in respect of Hall aligning these authors to his, Hall's, use of 'true' applied to Rome as a church.

<sup>11</sup> Kenneth Fincham, ed., *Visitation Articles and Injunctions of the early Stuart Church*, II (1998), 187.

<sup>12</sup> See chapter 2.2.

<sup>13</sup> Faulkner, *An Historical and Descriptive Account*, 43-44. See also Fuller's *Church History of Britain*, in the '17<sup>th</sup> century' section at 'A.D. 1609. 7 James': Thomas Fuller, DD, *The Church History of Britain* [...] (London: for John Williams, 1655), book 10, 50-55 (images 486-9 and TCP text at EEBO), or Brewer's edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1845), v, 390.



him in his time, as it doth plainly appear in these his Labours.'<sup>14</sup> The very fact of Field's various appointments supports the accolade too. During his time in Oxford, apart from his lecturing and disputations there, Field was appointed puritan lecturer at Carfax, then divinity reader at Winchester cathedral, then lecturer at Lincoln's Inn; he was made chaplain in ordinary to Elizabeth and then James, and was given the next vacant prebend of Windsor, which became his in 1604 – he was immediately appointed 'Reader of the Divinity Lecture' for 1605;<sup>15</sup> he was made dean of Gloucester in 1610, was in line to be promoted to dean of Worcester,<sup>16</sup> was promised the bishopric of Oxford, made a member of two royal commissions in Hampshire, disputed with Dr Aglionby at Oxford in 1605 to acclaim,<sup>17</sup> and was named as a fellow of Chelsea College. To these we can add the testimonies, mentioned in chapter 1, of John White: 'if any man desire to see all these and other questions concerning the Church more scholastically and accurratly handled: Let him read D.R. Field, of the Church [...]. A booke that I commend';<sup>18</sup> and of Fuller, in styling Field by the title of this thesis;<sup>19</sup> and of Joseph Hall (noted above)..

Academically precocious by reputation,<sup>20</sup> Field even at a young age was said to be 'a child of great hopes, and of more than ordinary parts', and was 'educated in grammar learning'<sup>21</sup> at Berkhamsted school,<sup>22</sup> before entering Oxford university in 1577<sup>23</sup> at age 16,<sup>24</sup> where his father 'maintained him altogether at his owne Charge a Commoner in Magdalene-Hall, without the Help of any Schollarship or Fellowship'.<sup>25</sup> That he was sent to Berkhamsted School, then Oxford, is worth noting; certainly not a gentleman, his father, John, described himself as a 'yeoman' in his will of 1614. And yet his

<sup>14</sup> Anthony Wood, *Athenae* (1691), I, 349, entry 432.

<sup>15</sup> Admitted 3 August 1604, appointed 1 October 1604. See Shelagh Bond, (ed.), *The Chapter Acts*, 49.

<sup>16</sup> On the testimony of Joseph Hall; *Memorials*, 17-18.

<sup>17</sup> *Memorials*, 10. See below.

<sup>18</sup> The full quotation is: 'But if any man desire to see all these and other questions concerning the Church more scholastically and accurratly handled: Let him read D.R. Field, of the Church, printed Anno 1606. A booke that I commend to our zealouset adversaries to reade with diligence and indifferently [...]' John White, 1570-1615, DD (1612), royal chaplain c.1614, *The Way to the True Church* (London: 1612 (2<sup>nd</sup> edn) or 1616 (3<sup>rd</sup> edn)), marginal note added since the first edition of 1610, Sig c7<sup>v</sup>, 'The Preface to the Reader, Touching the present controversies betweene us and the Romish Church', §17; or *The Workes of that Learned and Reverend Divine, John White, Doctor in Divinitie* (London: 1624), Sig. B<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>19</sup> Cited shortly in this section; this is also quoted at *Memorials*, 13.

<sup>20</sup> This and subsequent paragraphs are a compilation of biographical information gleaned from the various sources mentioned above, that points to the academic prowess of Field, as acknowledged in his time and subsequently. It is not a comprehensive biography. All quotations are from Nathaniel Field's *Some Short Memorials*, unless otherwise indicated. Degree dates are from *Fasti Oxonienses*.

<sup>21</sup> Wood, *Athenae* (1721).

<sup>22</sup> See G14467, manuscript annotation opposite page 2.

<sup>23</sup> It is Wood in his 1691 *Athenae Oxonienses* who supplies this year and age. *BN* and *DNB* repeat it, though *BN* has a clear printing error for the date ('1557'). Nathaniel Field does not give this information. We do not know if Wood guesses the year (and age), perhaps by subtracting the usual four years from the BA date, or if he knew from another source now lost.

<sup>24</sup> In this era this is not a particularly young age to go up to Oxford.

<sup>25</sup> *Memorials*, 2.

grandfather, Thomas Field, in his will of 1559, described himself as 'husbandman', lesser in status.<sup>26</sup> We do not know when this elevation in social status, whether recognised in the eyes of society generally, or just in John Field's own estimation, took place. But if, earlier in the late 1560s or early 1570s John was held to be a husbandman, ranking below yeoman, then perhaps it would be significant that a child of such a family received an early education befitting the raised status.

Field took, at Magdalen Hall, degrees BA (18 November 1581, aged 20), MA (2 June 1584, aged 22), BD (14 June 1592, aged 30 – not January as is sometimes stated,<sup>27</sup> which rests upon a mistake in the Bliss edition of Wood's *Fasti*),<sup>28</sup> then DD (7 December 1596, at Queen's College, aged 35). He gained an early reputation at Oxford, being appointed catechism lecturer in 1584 after taking his MA aged 22, which although being a private lecture for the hall, drew a large audience from the whole university. This included the much older, and famous, Dr John Rainolds (or Reynolds), president of Corpus Christi College and champion of the puritan movement, later representing the millenary petitioners at the Hampton Court conference. Reynolds' name was associated with other younger Oxford scholars, too, such as Richard Crakanthorpe. We learn that Crakanthorpe himself admired Field's wisdom.<sup>29</sup> Like Field, Crakanthorpe was highly regarded at Oxford, especially as a teacher and preacher, and also wrote stridently against Romanism. But it may be significant to note that Crakanthorpe's biographies indicate that it was he, the protégé, who was profoundly influenced by Reynolds, the mentor;<sup>30</sup> but in Field's case it seems to have been the other way round – it is Reynolds who regularly listened to and clearly admired Field. Field set the tone for his life's work in these weekly disputations in contending against the writings of Cardinal Bellarmine and like 'papists', as Field denominated them; he was soon widely recognised as one of the best disputants in the university ('so eminently the best' in Nathaniel's opinion),<sup>31</sup> and became famous for his prowess in school divinity. He even pursued his interest in divinity as a recreation, being often found in the

<sup>26</sup> John Field's will commences thus: 'In the name of God Amen, The Thyretenth Day of Februarie in the yeare of our Lord a thousand six hundred and fowrtene, I, John Field of the hill in the parish of Hemlehemsted in the Countie of Hertf yeoman, sicklie and weake in bodye but of good and perfect memorye and state of mynde, I give God humble and hartye thanks for it: Make my last will and testament in manner and forme following [...] ('registered' and 'filed' will, documents 2HR96/HRT:23360 and 40HW15/HRT:23361, held at Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies, Hertford, UK); and Thomas Field's commences thus: 'In the name of god Amen The xvij day of October Anno dm M CCCC lix I Thomas Felde husbondmā of the parishe of Hemyh̄mstede being seke of body but of good remembrance thanks be to god make this my last will and testament as here after folowith [...] (Calendar of Wills and Administrations in the Archdeaconry of Huntingdon, Transcripts of Wills, xii, 218-220, held at Huntingdonshire Archives, Huntingdon, UK).

<sup>27</sup> *BN* and *DNB* both say January. Foster makes a mistake too, giving the date as 14 July 1592. The correct date of 14 June 1592 I have checked in the original registers.

<sup>28</sup> Wood's first edition of 1691 and second edition of 1721 both have the correct date of 14 June 1592. In the third edition of 1815, edited by Philip Bliss, either Bliss or the typesetter in transcribing 1721 has misread an easily misreadable 'u' (*Fasti*, 1721, i, 143) for an 'a' (*Fasti*, 1815, ii, 258).

<sup>29</sup> 'Doctor Crakanthorpe [...] tells him that *he longs to conferre again, and often with him*' (*Memorials*, 11), italics original.

<sup>30</sup> E.g. *ODNB*.

<sup>31</sup> *Memorials*, 3.

schools answering questions and disputing, with the usual audience.<sup>32</sup> One wonders if his early biographers (Nathaniel Field, who gives this information, and Wood following)<sup>33</sup> had in mind the similar record of the boy Jesus at the Jerusalem temple, recorded in Luke's gospel.<sup>34</sup> If indeed this may have been in mind, then it would be a notable comparison, or even contrast, as Field is *answering* questions (Jesus in the story was *asking* them), and if such an allusion were deliberate this would further indicate the biographers' esteem of him. Such, indeed, was his reputation as an exceptional scholar that it is recorded that Field's rooms in the hall were long after his departure shown as an object of interest.<sup>35</sup>

Much of the above paragraph rests upon the testimony of admiring followers, especially Field's son Nathaniel. But much of it is of a factual nature rather than mere opinion, and it is hard to imagine why even a sycophantic disposition might manufacture biographical details such as 'his prowess in school divinity' (which is testified to by Frith anyway) or his rooms being shown. Furthermore, there is much additional circumstantial evidence of a factual nature which is verifiable, and which I have verified. For example, we know that Field held a number of lectureships, being appointed in 1591 to the municipally funded puritan lectureship at St Martin, Carfax, in Oxford city centre, giving fortnightly sermons to the townspeople there;<sup>36</sup> this was followed by Field being made divinity reader at Winchester Cathedral<sup>37</sup> in c.1591/92, around the time he took his BD (though the cathedral archives appear to have no record of this Winchester appointment),<sup>38</sup> at which point he seems to have left the university. Then in 1594 he was chosen for the distinguished and exacting office of Divinity Reader at the Honorary Society of Lincoln's Inn, another 'puritan lectureship'.

In 1581, the Inn, desiring to follow other Inns<sup>39</sup> and many parishes<sup>40</sup> who had already appointed such puritan lectureships (which had become numerous throughout London), in response to a petition presented to the bench, had sought the services of Laurence Chaderton,<sup>41</sup> then John Reynolds, to be

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> *Memorials*, 3-4; *Athenae Oxonienses* (1721, I, col. 410; Bliss, II, col. 181).

<sup>34</sup> 'And it came to pass, that after three days they [his parents] found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions.' (Luke 2:46, KJV).

<sup>35</sup> *Memorials*, 3.

<sup>36</sup> Paul Seaver, *The Puritan Lectureships: The Politics of Religious Dissent 1560-1662* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1970), 112.

<sup>37</sup> Wood, *Athenae Oxonienses*. Nathaniel Field does not supply this datum.

<sup>38</sup> However, Field's son Nathaniel confirms this appointment, in a manuscript note found by le Nève with the fair draft of *Memorials*. I make mention of this later. The note is transcribed in manuscript by le Nève in the British Library copy of *Memorials*, shelf mark G14467.

<sup>39</sup> Gray's Inn and The Temple preceded Lincoln's Inn in this regard.

<sup>40</sup> Seaver claims 30 parishes at this time (Seaver, 124).

<sup>41</sup> 'Ytt is ordered that meanes shalbe used to M' ['Doctor' is struck out] Chatterton to reade at Mychelmas Terme nexte, according to a byll [i.e. a petition] offered to the bench' (*The Black Books of Lincoln's Inn*, ed. by J. Douglas Walker and W.P. Baildon (London: Lincoln's Inn, 1897-1902), I (1897), year 1581, fo. 320, 421, square brackets within the quotation original to *Black Books*, i.e. an editorial addition to the manuscript text).

their inaugural Divinity Reader, but unsuccessfully in each case.<sup>42</sup> Finally William Charke<sup>43</sup> was appointed instead, with the support (for Charke in particular and the office in general) of both Lord Cecil and the Archbishop of Canterbury.<sup>44</sup> This is noteworthy, for all of Chaderton, Reynolds and Charke were leading puritans of undoubted reputation, indicating that the Inn definitely desired their lectureship to be a decidedly puritan one.

This is significant, and will repay a brief study. William Charke, a puritan of definite nonconformist inclinations,<sup>45</sup> and the first holder of the post from 1581,<sup>46</sup> was suspended as Divinity Reader in 1593 by Archbishop Whitgift.<sup>47</sup> Charke had fallen foul of the latter for his not-so-moderate puritan views, despite the office of Preacher as such having gained a highly favourable reputation with Whitgift, it being noted at the time, 'Whereas [...] the Archebysshoppe of Canterbury [...] beinge perswadid that the former zeale and affection towards soe good a woorke dothe still contynue [...]'.<sup>48</sup> Consequently, and probably under pressure from the archbishop,<sup>49</sup> the benchers' council resolved in 1593 to retain the office, but divide it amongst four lecturers, two from each of Oxford and Cambridge, serving a quarter year each. George Kingsmill,<sup>50</sup> of the large Kingsmill family (many with puritan sympathies), was one of two benchers charged with seeking out two from Oxford.<sup>51</sup> For some reason not recorded in the Black Books, this quadripartite scheme did not happen, but instead it is recorded in 1594 that 'M<sup>r</sup> Feilde shalbe treated w<sup>th</sup> [...] to be Preacher or Divinitie Reader<sup>[52]</sup> in

<sup>42</sup> '[W]ee [...] having made offer to dyvers, as to M<sup>r</sup> Chaderton, M<sup>r</sup> Reynoldes, and others, could not procure them thither by reason they are not willing to leave the places and charges they are in already' (*The Black Books*, I, 458).

<sup>43</sup> Charke had been lecturing at Gray's Inn for five years prior to his Lincoln's Inn appointment (Seaver, 358).

<sup>44</sup> 'M<sup>r</sup> Charke shalbe treated w<sup>th</sup> by [...] to be Divinitie Reader in this Howse.' (*The Black Books*, I, 1581, fo. 334, 424); '[W]ee have bene of longe tyme desirous to have a Preacher in o<sup>r</sup> [our] howse, like as is in other Howses of Court', and 'the Benche of Lincoln's Inne have made choise of late of M<sup>r</sup> Charke to be their Preach<sup>r</sup>, as other Howses of Cowrte have likewise donne' (*The Black Books*, I, Appendix VIII, 458-59).

<sup>45</sup> 'This Chark was a Puritan, and for the new discipline, and against the government of the Church by Bishops', quoted from 'Styrye, *Annals*, III, 55, 56' in *The Black Books of Lincoln's Inn* (London: Lincoln's Inn, 1897-2001), II (1898), 1592-3, fo. 476, 28. See in the main text shortly below for a comment about the distinction between 'puritan' and 'nonconformist'.

<sup>46</sup> Charke was chosen after first offers 'to M<sup>r</sup> Chaderton, M<sup>r</sup> Reynoldes, and others [were declined] by reason they are not willing to leave the places and charges they are in already' (*Black Books*, I, Appendix VIII, 458). Although not the first choice, Charke had come highly recommended: 'the Bishope [...] doth very well lyke of M<sup>r</sup> Charke for many good giftes in him, wherof also himself remembred some particul<sup>rs</sup> and gave him his very good commendacions' (*Black Books*, I, Appendix VIII, 458).

<sup>47</sup> Seaver, 193. Also see 'Whereas the most reverend father in God, my Lord the Archebysshoppe of Canterbury, his grace, after the late remove of M<sup>r</sup> Charke, Devynitye Reader in the house [...]', (*Black Books*, II, 1592-3, fo. 476, 28), and 'Preacher: Removed by superior commande' in the original manuscript index (under 'Preacher') to *Black Books*, Vol. I, held by the Lincoln's Inn Archives, London.

<sup>48</sup> *Black Books*, II, 1592-3, fo. 476, 28.

<sup>49</sup> This is suggested by the tone of the above *Black Books* entry.

<sup>50</sup> George Kingsmill, c.1557-1618, son of Sir John, brother of Richard, a 'highly regarded lawyer, who was made a queen's serjeant in 1595' (*ODNB*, entry on 'Kingsmill family').

<sup>51</sup> *Black Books*, II, 1592-3, fo. 476, 28-29. See shortly for the relevance of this remark.

<sup>52</sup> The 'Preacher' and the 'Divinity Reader' were synonymous terms (*Black Books*, I, 1583, fo. 356 and footnote 432; *Black Books*, II, 1594, fo. 497, 35: '[...] Preacher or Reader of Divinitie [...]').

this Howse', and that he was 'willinge to accepte'.<sup>53</sup> The Preacher's duties were 'to reade [...] a dyvinitye Lecture twyse in the weake, to preache uppon the Sabothe day, and at [...] Communion'.<sup>54</sup>

It is recorded that at Lincoln's Inn Field was as renowned as elsewhere, as 'he gave very great contentment to the judicious and learned auditory, and gained many friends among them'<sup>55</sup>, and in particular, one of the benchers there, Richard Kingsmill,<sup>56</sup> clearly impressed by Field, offered him 'without any sollicitation' the living of Burghclere in Hampshire,<sup>57</sup> near to Highclere where he, Kingsmill, lived. A further indication that Field was highly esteemed at Lincoln's Inn is that he was 'admitted' as a member of the Inn at the end of his period of service.<sup>58</sup> This is unusual, because a Preacher would not ordinarily be honoured with such an esteemed position. In my own researches at Lincoln's Inn I found only two other such instances where the Preacher was admitted as a member, and that was Field's successor, the likewise esteemed John Aglionby, admitted by 'special admission' (i.e., exceptionally),<sup>59</sup> and Thomas Gataker.<sup>60</sup> Field and Aglionby were clearly acquainted with one another, because it was Field himself who recommended Aglionby to be his successor (we know this because of a detail present in the manuscript originals of the *Black Books*, but absent in the (edited) *Black Books* themselves).<sup>61</sup> Field and Aglionby encountered one another later, as well, as they disputed with one another before the king in 1605.<sup>62</sup> Field's 'admission' as a member, on 12 February 1596,<sup>63</sup> towards the end of his final term of service (Hilary term of this year), but after his appointment to Burghclere had been made and his successor Aglionby appointed, was exceptionally, it seems from the manuscript original of the Admissions Book,<sup>64</sup> on a privileged *ex gratia* 'guest'

<sup>53</sup> *Black Books*, II, 1594, fo. 497, 34.

<sup>54</sup> *Black Books*, II, 28, 1592-3, fo. 476. The Preacher's emoluments were £40 p.a. plus board, one of the highest, perhaps the highest, remuneration for a lectureship in London: 'M<sup>r</sup> Feilde, now Reader in Divinitie in this House, shalbe allowed for his dyett out of the House tenne poundes yearlie [...] his stipende of xli<sup>ii</sup> [£40] by year' (*Black Books*, II, 39).

<sup>55</sup> Wood, *Athenae Oxonienses*; Nathaniel Field, *Memorials*, 4.

<sup>56</sup> Richard Kingsmill, c.1528-1600, lawyer, prominent at Lincoln's Inn, surveyor of the court of wards from 1590. His estate included Highclere, where he had his home, and the adjacent Burghclere.

<sup>57</sup> *Memorials*, 5; *Athenae Oxonienses*.

<sup>58</sup> *The Records of the Honorable Society of Lincoln's Inn. Vol. I. Admissions from A.D. 1420 to A.D. 1799* (London: Lincoln's Inn, 1896), 121, entry for 12 February 1596, which reads, '1595-6 Feb 12 Richard Feild, of Herts, bacch., theol'.

<sup>59</sup> *Admissions*, 124, entry for 15 June 1597, which reads, '1597 June 15 John Aglionby, of Cumberland, Master of Arts, special admission'.

<sup>60</sup> *Black Books*, II, ix. Gataker was also admitted *ex gratia*.

<sup>61</sup> The manuscript entry, for the council held on 11 November 1595, reads, 'It is ordred by the comendation of M<sup>r</sup> Field that M<sup>r</sup> Aglionby shall succeade M<sup>r</sup> Feilde & be the reader in his rome & shall begin his Reading in Easter terme in respect that M<sup>r</sup> Feilde is contented to supplye the rome this next terme.' [i.e., the Hilary term commencing January 1596] (*Black Books*, Book VI, 1595, fo. 12; original manuscript, held by the Lincoln's Inn Archives, London). The first part of this manuscript entry is not present in the printed *Black Books*, where it reads, 'M<sup>r</sup> Aglionby to succeed M<sup>r</sup> Field and be [Divinity] Reader in his room; he shall begin his reading in Easter Term, as M<sup>r</sup> Field will fill the office this next Term.' (*Black Books*, II, 44, 1595-6, fo. 12, square brackets within the quotation original to the edited and published version of the *Black Books*, i.e. an editorial addition to the manuscript text).

<sup>62</sup> This is remarked on shortly below.

<sup>63</sup> The Lincoln's Inn Admissions Book records this date as 12 February 1595, of course.

<sup>64</sup> *Admissions Book*, No. 2, 1595-6, Feb. 12 [i.e., 12 February 1596], fo. 62b; original manuscript, held by the Lincoln's Inn Archives, Lincoln's Inn, London.

basis. One of the signatories to the admission, the signature being readable on the manuscript, was Richard Kingsmill. Although at this time it was common for individuals not destined for the bar to seek for themselves admission to an Inn, for the purpose of making social contacts and advancing social status,<sup>65</sup> this motive would be out of character for Field, and I suggest it is reasonable to suppose that the privileged nature of this 'admission' confirms the exceptional esteem in which Field had been held. That George and Richard Kingsmill were involved in the early Divinity Lecturer appointments is significant for our study, in that the Kingsmill family were notable puritans, though not nonconformists. Both Richard and his nephew Sir William Kingsmill, c.1557-1618,<sup>66</sup> and their families were regular attenders at Field's church, All Saints, Burghclere,<sup>67</sup> such was their desire to hear him preach.<sup>68</sup>

Apart from the first lecturer, Charke, at least three others were of definite and prominent puritan persuasion, namely Thomas Gataker (Preacher 1602-13), John Preston (1622-28) and Joseph Caryl (1632-47). They were all of high reputation, all held the office before the Commonwealth period, and Charke, Gataker and Caryl were the longest serving Preachers up to the end of the seventeenth century. The Inn chapel had to be enlarged to accommodate Preston's popularity.<sup>69</sup> One of the most famous of Lincoln's Inn's lecturers (1647-54) was James Usher, Archbishop of Armagh,<sup>70</sup> and he, and likewise the future Archbishop of Canterbury John Tillotson (1663-91) later, was certainly sympathetic to the puritan (though not nonconformist) cause. All in all, we cannot agree with the undefended statement of Paul Seaver that Richard Field was not a puritan 'of any stripe', echoed by Alan Cromartie, again without adducing evidence.<sup>71</sup> Such a view is incompatible with the favour Field found amongst so many notable figures of definite, sometimes considerable, puritan 'stripe'. There is one further *possible* indication that Field may have had puritan connections, and that is that at least some of the Hertfordshire Fields appear to have had puritan inclinations or even commitment, seen

<sup>65</sup> I am indebted to the current (September 2016) Lincoln's Inn Archivist for this datum.

<sup>66</sup> *Memorials*, 5. Richard lived at nearby Highclere, the adjoining parish to the west, where the much later Highclere Castle now stands, and William at Sydmonton Court in the adjoining parish to the east.

<sup>67</sup> All Saints, Burghclere, still stands, largely unaltered structurally since Field's time, and is a grade I listed building, still retaining its sixteenth century heavy bench pews. It is still consecrated, although the main village of Burghclere moved northwards over time, and a new parish church was built centrally there in the nineteenth century; so All Saints, situated in a small village known now as Old Burghclere, is now rarely used for services. A modern handwritten list of rectors in the church wrongly, or at least demoting-ly, assigns the degree STB (i.e. *Sacrae Theologiae Baccalaureus*, or BD) to Field, which was correct in 1594, but he became STP (i.e. *Sacrae Theologiae Professor*, or DD) in 1596. Adjacent to the church is Burghclere Manor, as it is now known, but was the rectory in Field's time, probably originating as a Saxon hall house. In the churchyard I found no evidence of the graves of two of Field's first children, John and Benjamin, who died within days of birth in 1597 and 1598 respectively.

<sup>68</sup> *Memorials*, 5.

<sup>69</sup> Seaver, 235.

<sup>70</sup> Aged 66 when he was appointed; failing health brought his tenure to a close. The celebrated John Donne was also a lecturer (1616-22).

<sup>71</sup> Seaver, 112. Alan Cromartie, 'King James and the Hampton Court Conference', in *James VI and I, Ideas, Authority and Government*, ed. by Ralph Houlbrooke (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), 65.

not least in the tone of their wills; I concede it would be speculative to necessarily connect our Field with the puritan tendency, but it is interesting to note that a 'Nathaniell Field of the Hill, Clerke', almost certainly our Field's son, gave £8 towards the parliamentary army in 1644.<sup>72</sup>

Another intriguing puritan connection is likewise close at hand in the (current-day) Leverstock Green area of Hemel Hempsted, where the Field family's farm, 'The Hill', was located. Less than three kilometres away is the (now ruined) mansion of Gorhambury, where there resided one Anne Bacon, née Cooke, second wife of Sir Nicholas Bacon, the mother of polymath Sir Francis Bacon, and sister-in-law to William Cecil. Anne was the daughter of Sir Anthony Cooke, a tutor to Edward Tudor (later Edward VI); she was extremely well educated by Cooke (in the church fathers and classical languages),<sup>73</sup> and, with distinction, she famously translated Jewel's *Apologie* from Latin into English.<sup>74</sup> More importantly for us, she was an ardent protestant of decidedly puritan inclinations; she supported Thomas Cartwright, and also did much to sponsor (including financially) various puritan ministers in Hertfordshire – she had the gift of some nearby benefices. Anne has been associated with the sponsorship of *A Parte of a Register* as well, which places her not only within puritanism, but decidedly nonconformist too.

None of this proves that our Field himself was associated with committed puritan ministers, as Anne Bacon was, even though the Field family at The Hill and nearby do seem to have been. Nonetheless, I consider that all attempts to distance Field too far from the puritan camp fall foul of the hard evidence of some definite (and some indefinite) associations and friendships, at least earlier in his career.

That two at least of Field's lectureships were puritan lectureships is a matter of interest, in that though fervently protestant, Field was by no means a puritan in the sense of *nonconformist* puritan – indeed we know that he opposed nonconformist tendencies in Oxford University, notwithstanding Reynolds' attendance at his lectures mentioned above; and his *Of the Church* reveals the same disposition, particularly in book 1, chapter 18, concerning 'the damnable pride' of those who complain of 'want of due execution of discipline' in the churches, and in book 5, chapter 26, arguing against 'lay-elders, falsely by some supposed to be governors of the Church',<sup>75</sup> although the work as a whole is not directed specifically against presbyterianism. Indeed, the preceding references are from two chapters amongst very few only which even address puritanism or nonconformism in the

<sup>72</sup> *The Impact of the First Civil War on Hertfordshire 1642-47*, ed. by Alan Thomson (Hertfordshire Record Publications, 2007), citing TNA: SP28/154 Hemel Hempstead parish account for The Propositions etc., July 1641 - 14 February 1643(4). £8 then would be the equivalent of a few thousand pounds today.

<sup>73</sup> ODNB entry on Anne Bacon.

<sup>74</sup> But without recognition on the title page.

<sup>75</sup> (1.18/1.55) and (5.26/1.201) respectively.

entire 2,000 pages of the EHS edition of *Of the Church* – the nonconformists are not generally his target. Elsewhere, Field indicates that he does not see material differences between the ‘puritans’ and the ‘protestants’ at the level of the non-negotiable central core of doctrine.<sup>76</sup> And, as we have seen in the chapter on ministerial orders, Field was convinced that government by bishops, as having a greater pre-eminence and power of jurisdiction (though not of order) than the presbyters generally, had the supreme witness of history.<sup>77</sup> In these respects he was certainly opposed to nonconformism. But Field certainly had moderate puritan associates, and consequently may have had certain moderate puritan sympathies, because it is hard to imagine how his association with notable puritans such as the Kingsmills could have been sustained otherwise.

We should remember also that the words ‘puritan’ and ‘nonconformist’ do not necessarily connote the same thing. *Some* puritans were nonconformists, or ‘proto-presbyterians’, in the sense of rejecting episcopal church government, seeking a ‘new discipline’, and advocating the notion of non-ordained, non-teaching church elders, and there is no doubt that Field was opposed to such nonconformism from his days at Oxford onwards, as I have shown above.<sup>78</sup> But there were puritans too who had no such nonconformist inclinations, who had no intention of rejecting the Church of England paradigm and certainly not of separating from it, who did not reject bishops, but who sought the abolition of what they termed and considered to be popish practices, who emphasised the need for a preaching ministry by an educated clergy, and who strived after personal godliness and piety.<sup>79</sup> Of course, there was no clear boundary between the two categories, and a clear definition of ‘puritan’ has defied all modern attempts to delineate one. But in all my research into Field’s writings and reputation I have found no reason to suggest that he opposed or was discomfited by the latter of the above two categories. I have observed already that when Field was summoned to attend the Hampton Court conference in 1604 he was numbered amongst those supporting the (puritan) petitioners, and ‘went in with them’. Now of course, the petitioners were seeking a continuing reformation of the Church of England in a decidedly presbyterian direction, and so it would not be surprising if Field did speak against them in respect of this program (as one account of the conference declared). Yet equally, given Field’s peaceable disposition generally (except towards Rome), and his known association with figures such as Reynolds and the Kingsmill brothers of a

<sup>76</sup> E.g., *Of the Church*, Appendix to Book 5, The Third Part (iv.512-3): ‘But do all these protestant writers named by him [probably Richard Broughton], teach, that there is no material difference between protestants and puritanes? Surely no. For touching myself, I never wrote any such thing’. Richard Broughton is the supposed author of the anonymous *The First Part of Protestants Proofes* (Paris: 1607), which Field responds to in the ‘Third Part’ of his final appendix published with his Book 5 in 1610.

<sup>77</sup> Especially see Book 5, chapter 27.

<sup>78</sup> The instance of William Charke, mentioned above, is a case in point. As quoted above, he was a ‘Puritan, [but of the sort who was] for the new discipline, and against the government of the Church by Bishops’.

<sup>79</sup> And, for example, the holding of multiple benefices and other like abuses such as nepotism, and also excommunication enacted by officials from the laity.



puritan disposition, that he went in with them is not surprising either. It would seem, then, that in these early days of Field's career, his reputation being already impressive, Reynolds and others of the millenary petitioners entertained hopes that Field would be sympathetic to their cause, even as late as 1604, the year of the Hampton Court Conference, when he was aged 42.

That Field was of studious bent, and not seeking preferment, and loving his reading and research more than the limelight, is testified to by his subsequently turning down the more valuable and more prestigious living of St Andrew's, Holborn, preferring to remain in the comparative quiet of the country, the better to proceed with his studies. This living became vacant when Richard Bancroft, who had held it since 1584, was appointed bishop of London on 21 April 1597. So Nathaniel Field's 'After', in 'After my father was settled at Burroughcleare, he had the offer of the Parsonage of St. Andrewes in Holborne',<sup>80</sup> turns out to be two years later (Field was instituted to Burghclere in 1595). That Field's refusal of the Holborn appointment might indeed have cost him preferment and fortune, is clear, because the person who did become rector of St Andrew's, Holborn, in May 1597, and for whom it was a stepping-stone to ecclesiastical greatness, was John King,<sup>81</sup> future bishop of London. John King was a renowned Calvinist evangelical anti-Romanist preacher, known for his humility and evangelical fervour, called the 'King of preachers' by James I in typical punning mood. When King died in 1621 his estate was worth £12,000 (c.£4 million today); so the Holborn post, turned down by Field, did lead to valuable preferment for King. Field, on the other hand, 'never aimed at greatness, either for himselfe or his Posteritie'.<sup>82</sup>

Field was renowned as a preacher too, even when still at Oxford, and Wood remarks that 'it be a rare thing for the same man to attain unto perfection in both' preaching and school divinity. Both Kingsmill and his nephew, Sir William of Sydmonton Court in Burghclere, were regular attenders at Burghclere church. That Field's reputation as a preacher had become well known is clear from his having received an invitation from Hunsdon, the Lord Chamberlain, dated 6 September 1598, to preach before the queen, Elizabeth I, on or shortly after 23 September 1598.<sup>83</sup> Hunsdon stated that Field's 'Life and Learning' had 'bin enabled [i.e., told] unto me'. The queen was evidently impressed, for he was subsequently appointed one of her majesty's chaplains in ordinary, this being renewed by James I. Subsequently he received a grant, dated 30 March 1602,<sup>84</sup> to the next vacant prebend at

<sup>80</sup> *Memorials*, 5.

<sup>81</sup> John King, elected student of Christ Church, Oxford 1577, the same year Field went to Oxford, BA 1580, MA 1583, BD 1591, DD 1601, chaplain in ordinary to James 1603, dean of Christ Church Oxford 1605, bishop of London 1611, d. 1621. He has been said, mistakenly, to have been John King the prebend of Windsor 1580-1607. Also, he is not the John King, a different prebend of Windsor (1615-1638), and rector of Stourton before Nathaniel Field, who was the father of Rachel, whom Nathaniel married in St George's Chapel in 1629.

<sup>82</sup> *Memorials*, 58.

<sup>83</sup> *Memorials*, 7-8. Nathaniel had the original letter addressed to Field to hand.

<sup>84</sup> *Memorials*, 8.

Windsor, to which he succeeded 3 August 1604, and at the Michaelmas chapter that year was appointed reader of the divinity lecture for the year following. Field preached at Windsor more than any other prebend, and before the king often there and elsewhere; and in 1604 he published his *A learned sermon preached before the king at Whitehall*, discussed above. Significantly perhaps, this was preached on 16 March 1604 just two months after the Hampton Court conference, and published the same year – but there is no reason to suppose that this sermon was occasioned by the conference or Field's attendance at it. Rather, the occasion of this sermon was James I's coronation procession on 15 March.<sup>85</sup> This sermon with Jude v.3 as its text, appealing for loyalty to 'the faith which was once delivered unto the saints', we have seen to have been very significant for all Field's subsequent work – for this verse, quoted directly or indirectly throughout his *Of the Church*, undergirds his entire development of his notion of the true church; the true catholic church, in his opinion, as we saw in the above chapter on Field's ecclesiology, is the church which remains loyal to the apostolic faith.

We know, as remarked above, that King James admired Field and his preaching, and 'did very much Honour and Respect him, and delighted to Discourse with him about Points of Divinity'.<sup>86</sup> We have noted James' pun on Field's name; likewise, though much later, in similar punning vein, Thomas Fuller styled him in his Holy War 'that learned divine, whose memory smelleth like a *Field* the Lord hath blessed' (after Genesis 27:27).<sup>87</sup> Additionally, the stained glass east window installed in memory of Field in All Saints Church Burghclere, when it was refurbished in the mid-late nineteenth century, itself punned pictorially and verbally on the word 'field'.<sup>88</sup> When King James came to Oxford in 1605, Field was sent for to take part in the Divinity Act (a theological disputation held for the benefit of king and court). The disputation before the king, between Field and Dr John Aglionby, principal of St Edmund Hall, on the question *whether saints and angels know the hearts of men*, was, it was said, one of the best ever heard. Nathaniel Field narrates that he heard Sir Nathaniel Brent, one of the university proctors and later Vicar General and warden of Merton College, say that the disputation 'was the best Disputation that ever he heard in his Life, and that it was heard with great Attention and Delight by all that were present'.<sup>89</sup> And when James visited Hampshire c.1608, Thomas Bilson, bishop of Winchester, selected Field to be one of the preachers before the king. We have seen above how, likewise, in 1611, when James indicated his intention to hear all the prebends on his next visit

<sup>85</sup> After the procession the king was at Whitehall, Field preaching the sermon the next day.

<sup>86</sup> *Memorials*, 15.

<sup>87</sup> Thomas Fuller, BD, 1608-1661, English historian and churchman, in his *The Historie of the Holy Warre* (Cambridge: 1639), book IV, chapter 5, 175 (or nineteenth century reprint, *The History of the Holy War* (London: William Pickering, 1840), 184-5)), italics original to Fuller. Fuller offers this accolade at a point where he references Field, *Of the Church*, Book 3, ch. 5.

<sup>88</sup> Two Bible quotations are depicted in the two side lights of the east window, namely 'CONSIDER THE LILIES OF THE FIELD', words of Jesus Christ from Matthew 6:28 (KJV), and 'AS A FLOWER OF THE FIELD', from Psalm 103:15 (KJV).

<sup>89</sup> *Memorials*, 10.

to Windsor, Dean Thomson, required Field to preach in his turn and others'. When appointed in 1610 to the deanery of Gloucester, although he did not reside there often, preaching a few times only each year, it is said nonetheless that when he did preach, Field, as everywhere else, 'commanded a great audience'.

When residing at Windsor, which he did for some part of the year, typically during the winter months, his company and conversation was much valued. The company of distinguished churchmen and scholars that he lived amongst sought out his opinion in theological matters with acclaimed profit. He received accolades such as 'the most profitable Man that ever he Conversed with in his Life, from whom most was to be learned',<sup>90</sup> 'he much esteemed his Learning and Judgement, ever since he had bin his Auditor in Oxford, at Magdalen Hall and [in the church of St Martin] Carf[a]x',<sup>91</sup> 'he longs to conferre again, and often with him',<sup>92</sup> and 'he allwayes loaded himselfe with Questions whensoever he went unto him'<sup>93</sup> (these from different individuals). His admiring conversants included King James himself; Sir Henry Savile, provost of Eton; Sir Henry Neville, who had been queen Elizabeth's ambassador to France, and who 'was his intimate Acquaintance, and one that entirely loved him';<sup>94</sup> Dr Giles Thomson, dean of Windsor; and Dr John Spenser, sometime president of Corpus Christi College whose widow Field later took as his second wife; learned men all, and all looking to him for resolution of 'sundry points of divinity'.<sup>95</sup> After Field's death, Bishop Hall lamented the loss of 'so learned a man' (*DNB*) and named him as one of those he was referring to in his celebrated remark that the clergy of Britain is the wonder of the world (which we have quoted elsewhere).

Field and Richard Hooker himself too, in earlier years (Hooker died in 1600), it is said, were on terms of 'great friendship',<sup>96</sup> 'they agreeing so well in their judgments, and being both of [...] deep and profound learning'.<sup>97</sup> There is no reason to doubt this, although it should be noted that Hooker had left Oxford before Field arrived there, and had left the Temple before Field arrived at Lincoln's Inn, and subsequently their lives do not seem to have crossed in any marked way. Hooker was more than

<sup>90</sup> 'A judicious Divine [...] a Prebendarie of Windsor', as narrated by Nathaniel Field (*Memorials*, 12).

<sup>91</sup> 'Doctor Barlow the Deane of Wells' – this must be Ralph Barlow, dean of Wells 1621-31 – as narrated by Nathaniel Field (*Memorials*, 11).

<sup>92</sup> Dr Richard Crakanthorpe in a letter to Field, as narrated by Nathaniel Field (*Memorials*, 11).

<sup>93</sup> 'An able divine', as narrated by Nathaniel Field (*Memorials*, 11).

<sup>94</sup> As narrated by Nathaniel Field (*Memorials*, 12). Nathaniel Field also relates here that a daughter of Neville said of her father that he 'rejoiced in no Mans Companie more then in his'.

<sup>95</sup> *Athenae*, Bliss edn, II, and 1721 edn, I.

<sup>96</sup> Nathaniel Field states, having 'bin told by a Person of Credit', that 'there was a great Friendship betweene him and Mr. Hooker, which might very well be they agreeing so well in their Judgements, and being both of so suitable a Temper, of deepe and profound Learning, and of remarkeable Humilitie' (*Memorials*, 19-20). That Nathaniel was not himself aware of this friendship is not surprising – he was still not sixteen when his father died.

<sup>97</sup> (BN/I.iii-xiii).

seven years older, and died 16 years earlier. It is certainly true they had much in common temperamentally: they both preferred to study rather than occupy the limelight, both retiring to the country deliberately to this end; they were both firmly protestant but with anti-presbyterian convictions; they were both renowned for their pastoral heart, especially at parish level; they were both talented scholars, though we should remember that Hooker never proceeded to his DD. The most positive circumstantial evidence for the claimed friendship is that Dr John Spenser, who edited Hooker's books 1-5, was certainly on acquaintance terms with Field. Spenser's wife was Dorothy Cranmer, a favourite pupil of Hooker<sup>98</sup> and sister of George Cranmer (grand-nephew of the archbishop), who wrote 'an excellent letter' to Hooker in 1598 after the publication of the latter's Book 5;<sup>99</sup> Cranmer and Sandys were pupils (and became and remained close friends) of Hooker at Corpus Christi in Spenser's time. Much later on, Field married Spenser's widow. With all these connections between Spenser, Hooker, Cranmer and Sandys, together with the datum that Henry Savile and John Reynolds were acquaintances of both Hooker<sup>100</sup> and Field, it's entirely conceivable that Spenser would have introduced Field and Hooker to each other, even if their paths did not cross otherwise. Patterson claims that not only was Field a friend, but also a 'disciple of Richard Hooker'.<sup>101</sup> I doubt this; I have found no such suggestion anywhere else in all my researches, and it is unlikely that Field would be a disciple of anyone.

Furthermore, further to his skills as a preacher and as a disputant, to his knowledge of the controversies between the protestants and papists (of thoroughgoing contemporary importance in his time), and his advocacy of protestantism, and further to his value as a conversationalist, and to his immense learning in school divinity, Field 'had a great Memorie', particularly for everything he read. His son Nathaniel recorded that 'any Booke which he read, he was able to carrie away the Substance of it in his Memorie, and to give an account of all the materiall Passages therein'.<sup>102</sup> And to his prodigious memory we add also his even 'greater' judgment, in his insight into doctrinal issues and theological controversies, so that he 'was able to penetrate into the most subtle and intricate Disputes'.<sup>103</sup> If at this point one is tempted again to wonder if the admiring son is venturing an exaggerated, sycophantic opinion in regards to Field's memory and judgement, then a consideration of the truly vast number of quotations that Field makes from scholars through all the Christian ages

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<sup>98</sup> ODNB article on Spenser.

<sup>99</sup> George Cranmer, *Concerning the New Church Discipline, an Excellent Letter* (Oxford: 1642). See ODNB article on George Cranmer. George Cranmer and John Spenser, though about five years apart in age, were at Merchant Taylor's School at the same time (as were his lifelong friend Edwin Sandys, and also Lancelot Andrewes), and likewise Corpus Christi College, Oxford (together with Sandys).

<sup>100</sup> See ODNB entry on Hooker.

<sup>101</sup> Patterson, W.B., *King James VI and I and the Reunion of Christendom* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 113.

<sup>102</sup> As narrated by Nathaniel Field (*Memorials*, 21).

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*

should cause a rethink; in my own judgement for Field to achieve this without a prodigious, probably photographic, memory would be quite impossible in the timescale available, not least in his ability to recollect in the first place what various authors have written on a multitude of topics, let alone his ability to find or recall the quotations. Furthermore, he often gave the general sense of the writers he quotes rather than a verbatim transcription, indicating that he is recalling rather than looking the quotation up each time. And as for his judgement, it depends upon what we think Nathaniel Field meant by 'judgement': at no point does Nathaniel claim his father was always without doubt unequivocally correct in all his opinions – he does not ever address this; rather, the whole tenor of Nathaniel's biography throughout testifies to Field's ability always to address any issue of divinity trenchantly, informedly, and cogently – one gets the impression that it was not easy to win an argument against Field, and his writings most assuredly testify to this in my own opinion.

We should duly recall again at this point that virtually all this information about Field's learning derives from the biography of his admiring son Nathaniel. It might be wondered, therefore, if filial loyalty has lent a creative and imaginative embellishment to the truth. Do we have from Nathaniel an exaggerated account of Field's prodigious learning and reputation? This, I believe, is unlikely. Of course, given the filial affection Nathaniel must have felt for his father, and given his own undoubted esteem of him, one can understand his effusive tone, and his use of florid expressions of admiration and some perhaps extravagant terminology and phraseology (and we can add the observation that this is entirely normal in the writings of this period). But this does not imply factual inaccuracy, either at the level of biographical details or in terms of the general esteem in which Field was held. It must be observed that a large proportion of the factual details recorded by Nathaniel are independently verifiable from a number of different sources, such as Field's various appointments and achievements. Likewise, Field's renown as depicted by Nathaniel can also be corroborated widely elsewhere, such as, to take but one example, Fuller's attestation mentioned earlier, and which predates *Memorials*.<sup>104</sup> Additionally, Nathaniel himself acknowledges the danger of exaggeration, declaring himself to underestimate rather than overestimate Field's work for fear of this. In his *Epistle Dedicatory* to George Villiers, the Duke of Buckingham,<sup>105</sup> to whom he commends the 1628 and 1635 editions of Field's *Of the Church*, he writes of it (in contrast, he says, to the 'little in much' of the papists, whose 'great volumes are stuffed'),<sup>106</sup> 'I intend not a panegyric in the praise thereof. If

<sup>104</sup> We recall Fuller's testimony noted earlier: 'that learned divine, whose memory smelleth like a *field* the Lord hath blessed'.

<sup>105</sup> This is George Villiers the first Duke of Buckingham, who was one of King James' 'royal favourites', and was Lord High Admiral of England until his assassination on 23 August 1628, this latter title being noted by Nathaniel Field in his dedication. It cannot therefore be George Villiers the second Duke of Buckingham, the son of George Villiers the first Duke. However, the dedication to the first Duke, although it was re-typeset for the 1635 edition of *Of the Church*, and differs from it in one word, still retains the acknowledgement of the first Duke as being the Lord High Admiral; thus this is simply a repeat of the earlier dedication, and not a new dedication to the second Duke, who was an infant in 1628.

<sup>106</sup> (ED/I.xvii).

I give it not that praise which it deserves, my near relation to the Author may be my excuse, seeing whatsoever I say would seem rather to proceed from affection than judgment.'<sup>107</sup> (Incidentally, in this dedicatory note Nathaniel Field observes that the said Duke 'was pleased to shew unto the Author of this work while he lived' 'especial favour', affording us yet another indication of the worth in which Field had been held – although this may refer simply to Villier's offer to Field, presumably in his capacity as court official, of the bishopric of Oxford, in a letter to Field dated July 1616.) But additionally, and importantly, Nathaniel rests much of his biography on the testimony of others – he even quotes verbatim several court letters to Field which he has in his possession, including the one from Villiers. Nathaniel Field's publisher, John le Nève, adds his own affirmation, declaring that Field's 'Learned Works in defence [of the protestant Church of England] have so justly render'd his Memory venerable to Posterity'.<sup>108</sup> So unless Nathaniel has added dishonest fabrication of facts to his filial admiration (and it would have to be highly imaginative and creative), which possibility I am inclined to discount, it must be concluded that Nathaniel's own estimation of his father does not inordinately exceed that of others, who base their praise not upon Nathaniel's testimony, but upon their own observations and recollections, or who are dependent upon testimony which predates *Memorials*.<sup>109</sup> And further, the biography is far from complete; there are many gaps and unknown details of importance (as, for instance, where Field lived after leaving Oxford, how he met or was introduced to his first wife, how he knew Hooker, and the like). A materially embellished account of Field's life would perhaps be fuller and more even in its coverage, rather than being, as Nathaniel acknowledges, gathered together out of such material as he had to hand.<sup>110</sup>

So from the biographical information we have of Richard Field we are left with the overriding impression of a scholar, recognised to be of quite exceptional accomplishment and considerable renown in his day, if not ours, though we of course concede that this evaluation must be subject to scrutiny. All sources attest to his astonishing knowledge, judicious discernment and perceptive understanding of the early church Fathers and subsequent schoolmen through to his own day and of the entire corpus of school divinity, to his prodigious memory and discernment in theological controversy, to his adept skill in disputation and powerful preaching, and to his being 'a principal

<sup>107</sup> A fuller quotation here is: 'I think I might safely say thus much, that it compriseth much in a little: but I intend not a panegyric in the praise thereof. If I give it not that praise which it deserves, my near relation to the Author may be my excuse, seeing whatsoever I say would seem rather to proceed from affection than judgment. What my opinion of it is, I think I have sufficiently expressed, in that I have thought it not unworthy your Grace's patronage.' (ED/i.xviii), 'The Epistle Dedicatory' by Nathaniel Field to the Duke of Buckingham.

<sup>108</sup> And '[Nathaniel Field's] Memoirs [...] cannot fail to recommend the Perusal of them to the Lovers of Truth and Antiquity' (*Memorials*, iii).

<sup>109</sup> Such as Anthony Wood's original 1691 biography referred to above.

<sup>110</sup> 'I have determined with my self to say nothing of him, but what I have had from Persons worthy of Credit, what I find in Letters the Copies whereof are yet in my Custody, and what I find in such Memorials as he left under his own Hand' (*Memorials*, v).

maintainer of Protestantism'.<sup>111</sup> But now we turn to the second witness to Field's prodigiosity, namely the internal evidence, and after that the testimony of those impressed by Field's writings.

### 3.2 Field's erudition – the internal evidence

The historian W. Speed Hill has observed the meticulousness and the erudition with which Richard Hooker quoted historical sources.<sup>112</sup> Not including general conclusions of the church councils, Speed Hill has counted sixty-four individuals ranging from early philosophers and (above all) the early church Fathers and early historians such as Eusebius, through medieval schoolmen to contemporary writers, all quoted by Hooker. No-one doubts Hooker's erudition, but this record must surely pale before the huge wealth of Field's quotations from the same and many more sources. I have yet to undertake an exhaustive head count to mirror Speed Hill's of Hooker, but in a single chapter of twenty-two pages I have counted reference to the works of at least fifty-two separate individuals, four councils, and also the two medieval glosses.<sup>113</sup> In Field's earliest published work, the sermon on Jude 3 before the king at Whitehall in March 1604, which I have examined in an earlier chapter, 7,300 words long, we find references to 13 specific books of the Bible, 4 Bible characters, 9 emperors and popes, 4 Greek philosophers, 13 church fathers and later scholars, and 7 early church heretics, all named and/or quoted, as well as all three persons of the godhead and Satan too. Furthermore, Field's quotations are distributed with some evenness throughout the entire period of Christian history, as opposed to Hooker's which are heavily weighted towards the early church Fathers. Many of these thousands of Field's quotations are evidently quoted from memory, as there are mistakes (of no great moment) or they are otherwise not exact, but give the general sense at least. Like all scholars of his day, Field was entirely familiar with the classical languages, but he belonged to the vanguard of scholars who were beginning routinely to write in English, and he rarely fails to provide his own English translation of Latin and Greek originals.<sup>114</sup>

Furthermore, Field is up to date with the latest scholarship. Not only does he quote recently published works (e.g. Hooker, Stapleton); but also (by way of example) in rewriting the first chapter

<sup>111</sup> This expression was used by Anthony Wood in the entry on Field in his *Athenae Oxonienses*, all editions, 1st, 2nd and Bliss.

<sup>112</sup> In an unpublished paper delivered at a symposium hosted by the English diocese of Canterbury on 4 November 2000 to mark the quatercentenary of Hooker's death. Speed Hill is general editor of the Folger Library edition of Hooker's works.

<sup>113</sup> The so-called Ordinary Gloss (*Glossa Ordinaria*, supposedly by Strabo but probably, scholars now argue, produced by a team of scholars) and Interlinear Gloss (*Glossa Interlinearis*, by Anselm) – medieval Vulgate Bibles with commentary added alongside (in the margins, and in between the lines, respectively). Lyra's *Postills* were frequently included too.

<sup>114</sup> The exception is in the final chapters of his revision of the appendix to book 3, unfinished at his death, where he leaves much Latin untranslated in his most recent pages.

of book 3 sometime between 1606<sup>115</sup> and his death in 1616 he makes use of the recent researches of travellers returning from expeditions far abroad – the chapter surveys the state of Christendom as far abroad as India, and makes use of research material deriving from the late 1590s and beyond; for example, he is aware of the Synod of Diamper of 1599.<sup>116</sup> More interestingly, in the same revised chapter 1 of Book 3, Field records that ‘the patriarch of Alexandria wrote a most pious letter to the now lord archbishop of Canterbury [. . .]’.<sup>117</sup> Now, this letter is dated March 1616, the year of Field’s death in November. Clearly he is incorporating very recent material, and is writing up to his sudden death. We know anyway that Field was revising the appendix to Book 3 at the time of his death, as he leaves it unfinished half way through,<sup>118</sup> so it is most probable that we have Field’s final work in these chapters, and it shows that Field was ultra-up-to-date in his research (and reading list!).<sup>119</sup> Likewise, in this newly researched chapter, Field depends upon a number of other authors, such as the missionary-mystic Thomas à Jesu, whom Field quotes from his recent work of 1613, and perhaps others;<sup>120</sup> and also Brerewood,<sup>121</sup> etc. One wonders if Field’s fellowship of Chelsea College may have played a part in such recent research, though there is no evidence that Field ever gave practical effect to his fellowship, or ever resided there. But its nature as a research college invites the suggestion.

Field is a meticulous arguer.<sup>122</sup> That he has a thorough command of the bulk of sources he cites, often down to the fine details of the writers’ reasoning, is attested in his tendency to spot, as he alleges, the mistakes and non-sequiturs (and he finds very many) of his adversaries (and disdains their power of reasoning) in their attempting to appeal to these authors and harness them for their

<sup>115</sup> Perhaps even after 1614, the supposed year of the reissue of the original books 1-4 in their original (though typographically corrected) form.

<sup>116</sup> (3.1/i.130).

<sup>117</sup> ‘[. . .] desiring to join in communion with these Churches of England’ (3.1/i.143). This letter, from ‘Cyril by the Grace of God, Pope and Patriarch of the great City of Alexandria’, to George Abbot, Archbishop of Canterbury, in its Latin and English translations (from the original Greek), and Abbot’s reply, can be found in Ephraim Pagitt’s *Christianography* (Ephraim Pagitt, *Christianography, or, The description of the multitude and sundry sorts of Christians, in the world, not subject to the Pope* (London: for Robert Clavell, 1674)), Sig. Aaaa, 1-9 (i.e., final section of the work, its page numbers being not all consecutive). Field derives his information not from Pagitt, of course, whose work postdates Field; his source is ‘Casaubon’, but we have here a possible mis-recollection by Field, as Isaac Casaubon, and Field must surely mean he, died in 1614. At (3.1/i.141) the EHS editor cites the work by Paul Ricaut, *The present state of the Greek and Armenian churches*, 420, which is a correct reference to the information Field alludes to there, although this work postdates Field. I suspect Field has mis-remembered his source unless there is another Casaubon.

<sup>118</sup> Field was clearly revising chapter 12 (out of 27 chapters) of this appendix when he died, this chapter, ‘Of Merit’, being the one in which Field leaves a wealth of Latin quotations untranslated.

<sup>119</sup> In addition to the revision to the Appendix to Book 3, the work in progress at Field’s death, and in addition to Chapter 1 of Book 3, clearly being revised in March 1616, he also revised Book 3, chapter 23, perhaps after chapter 1.

<sup>120</sup> Thomas à Jesu, *De procuranda salute omnium gentium* (Antwerp, 1613) (see (3.1/i.103)), and perhaps *Stimulus Missionum* (Rome, 1610). Thomas à Jesu, 1564-1627, was a discalced carmelite monk, mystic and scholar of the Church of Rome.

<sup>121</sup> Edward Brerewood, *Enquiries touching the Diversity of Languages and Religions [. . .]* (London, 1614). Edward Brerewood, c.1565-1613, scholar and antiquary.

<sup>122</sup> But whether he is a reasonable or successful arguer must be open to scrutiny, of course; the fact that he is thorough does not mean his logic is unchallengeable.



own Romanist point of view. Whether the cogency and validity of his strident critique of his opponents, and of his own reasoning, and of the application of his sources towards his own ends, stands the scrutiny of a disinterested scholarly observer is of course arguable; less controvertible is his painstaking thoroughness and ability systematically to marshal his arguments. Field is typically Aristotelian in his capacity to categorise, analyse and summarise – his categorisations can reach a 'sixteenth' or 'eighteenth' or even in one case a 'twenty-third' followed by 'lastly',<sup>123</sup> and in a list reaching 'eighteenth' the 'fifteenth' category is subdivided up to 'sixthly',<sup>124</sup> and this sort of categorising and sub-categorising is not unusual for him. Throughout he is scrupulous and methodical, though, it must be conceded, highly pedantic and perfectionist.

### 3.3 Field's erudition – the appreciation of Field's readers

This one volume, thoroughly understood and appropriated, will place you in the highest ranks of doctrinal Church of England divines [...] and in no mean rank as a true doctrinal Church historian. [...] So having done, you will be in point of professional knowledge such a clergyman as will make glad the heart of your loving father, S.T. Coleridge.<sup>125</sup>

Thus ends a letter Samuel Taylor Coleridge wrote to his son Derwent in 1819, the 'one volume' being an annotated copy of Nathaniel Field's 1628 re-publication of the combined edition of Field's *Of the Church*, acquired by Coleridge in 1814, which, we are told, was favourite reading for the poet.<sup>126</sup> Coleridge wrote this letter in inscribing for his son this unique copy,<sup>127</sup> which was full of his own marginal notes on Field's text.<sup>128</sup> Coleridge not only wrote these marginalia, but wrote substantial analyses of the writings of such as Field ('Notes on Field and the Church'),<sup>129</sup> Hooker, Donne and Luther.<sup>130</sup> In fact, Coleridge, whose assessment of Field is admiring but not sycophantic, wrote more on Field than any other writer that I have been able to find until this current century. In his *Lay Sermons* Coleridge, very much like Hall and Skinner quoted above, speaks admiringly of 'names that must needs be so dear and venerable [...] as those of Hooker, Whitaker, Field, Donne, [...]; intellects

<sup>123</sup> (3.1/l.141).

<sup>124</sup> (3.1/l.151).

<sup>125</sup> Henry Nelson Coleridge, (ed.), *The Literary Remains of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, 4 vols (London: William Pickering, 1836-9), III (1838), 58-9.

<sup>126</sup> See, e.g., John Morrow, *Coleridge's Political Thought* [...] (Palgrave Macmillan, 1990), 194, n.111.

<sup>127</sup> Coleridge evidently didn't give his son this annotated copy of Field in 1819, because he continued his marginal annotations until 1824. See Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *A Book I Value: Selected Marginalia*, ed. by H.J. Jackson (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003), 71, and H.J. Jackson, *Marginalia: Readers Writing in Books* (New Haven, CT and London: Yale University Press, 2001), 157, 280, n.14.

<sup>128</sup> The marginal notes on Field's work are to be found in Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *Marginalia*, ed. by H.J. Jackson and George Walley, 6 vols (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1980-2001), II (1984), 649-686. See also H.J. Jackson, *Marginalia: Readers Writing in Books* (New Haven, CT and London: Yale University Press, 2001), 157 and 280, n.14. Coleridge is renowned for such marginalia he made in works he admired.

<sup>129</sup> 'Notes on Field and the Church' in *The Literary Remains of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, III, 57-92.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid*, III, 18-56 (Hooker), and 92-156 (Donne); and IV (1839), 1-65 (Luther).

formed under the robust discipline of an age memorable for keenness of research, and iron industry'.<sup>131</sup>

To what we have cited by way of biographical and internal evidence for Field's erudition, we can add the witness of many who themselves have been impressed by Field's writings. We have quoted the accolade given by the modern writer Avis, opening several pages devoted to Field in his *Anglicanism and the Christian Church* (discussed at the end of chapter 7), and the original *DNB* author Hooper remarked of *Of the Church*, 'It is needless to speak of a work which has long taken its stand by the side of Hooker among the grandest monuments of polemical divinity in the language'.<sup>132</sup> The editor of the 1847 Ecclesiastical History Society edition of Field's *Of the Church* remarked, 'It were both needless and unbecoming to eulogize a Book whose worth will be determined by its readers'.<sup>133</sup> Back in the seventeenth century the learned Dr John White (1570-1615) appears to have been so impressed with Field's *Of the Church* that he remarked in his *Preface* at the front of his own *The Way to the True Church*, 'But if any man desire to see all these and other questions concerning the Church more scholastically and accurately handled [i.e., better handled than he himself had done]: Let him read D. R. Field, *of the Church*'.<sup>134</sup> Le Nève, taking the trouble to bind on separate pages within a unique copy of his publication of Nathaniel Field's *Some Short Memorials* a considerable number of annotations to Nathaniel Field's biography,<sup>135</sup> would appear also to have regarded Field to have been of importance, as did its owner, White Kennett (1660-1728). Although his biographers describe Field as a humble man, he is nevertheless confident in his own abilities – to a friend, Dr Ralph Kettle<sup>136</sup> (or Kettell, president of Trinity College Oxford) who questioned the wisdom of writing a work that would inevitably attract a protracted controversy,<sup>137</sup> he is said to have responded, 'I will so write that they shall have no great Mind to Answer me',<sup>138</sup> and thereby 'anticipated the rank which has ever been

<sup>131</sup> Coleridge, *Lay Sermons*, 1852 edn., 116; or *Collected Works*, vi, 107.

<sup>132</sup> *DNB* entry on Field.

<sup>133</sup> *BN*.

<sup>134</sup> See full quotation shortly below, ending this section.

<sup>135</sup> See previous chapter for an analysis of these insertions and annotations.

<sup>136</sup> Dr Kettle (1563-1643) is described by Nathaniel Field as 'being his [Field's] ancient Acquaintance' (*Memorials*, 20). Kettle had been nominated for a scholarship to Trinity College, Oxford, by Lady Paulet, the widow of Sir Thomas Pope, the college's original founder. Lady Paulet lived at Tittenhanger, S.E. of St Albans, not far from either King's Langley, Kettle's boyhood home, or Hemel Hempstead, Field's boyhood home. Kettle was duly elected scholar in 1579, aged 16; then elected fellow 1583; DD 1597; then the third college president 1599. It may well be that Kettle and Field knew each other from childhood, as they were both clearly of exceptional academic ability as children, and they lived near to each other, and being of almost the same age, although we do not know where Kettle received his early schooling. John Aubrey records entertaining reminiscences of Kettle in his *Brief Lives*, portraying him as something of an amiable eccentric, but possibly not all detail being of complete veracity (John Aubrey, *Brief Lives*, ed. by Andrew Clark, 2 volumes (Oxford: Clarendon, 1898), II, 17; or modern editions). See also *DNB* and *ODNB* articles on Kettle, where he is spelt 'Kettell'.

<sup>137</sup> And it did so attract much critical recusant response, for example from Higgons and Brereley, despite Nathaniel Field's opinion that 'The maine of what he hath Written, was never Answered. Some have taken Exceptions against particular Passages here and there a Place, but the Maine and what is most Materiall they have wholly let alone' (*Memorials*, 20).

<sup>138</sup> '[Kettle] dissuaded him from it, telling him that when once he was engaged in writing of Controversies, he should never live quietly, but be continually troubled with Answers and Replies' (*Memorials*, 20).

assigned to his Work'.<sup>139</sup> In fact, though, some did answer Field. The large appendix to his first four books, published together with his fifth book in 1610, has Field answering some of his critics, including Theophilus Higgons; and the second edition of 1628, published through the advocacy of Field's son Nathaniel, included a long answer to another critic, John Brereley.<sup>140</sup> Brereley himself described Field as 'a man otherwyse grave and learned',<sup>141</sup> so even Field's Romanist critics could typically acknowledge Field's erudition.<sup>142</sup>

But if any man desire to see all these and other questions concerning the Church more scholastically and accuratly handled: Let him read D. R. Field, *of the Church*, printed Anno 1606. A Booke that I commend to our zelousest adversares to reade with diligence and indifferently, and to compare with the learnedst that have written of his owne side.<sup>143</sup>

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<sup>139</sup> *BN*.

<sup>140</sup> Assumed name for (it was originally thought) Lawrence Anderton, but most likely actually Lawrence's cousin James Anderton of Birchley Hall. The identification as James Anderton is defended in A.F. Allison, 'Who was John Brereley? The identity of a seventeenth-century controversialist', *Recusant History*, 16 (1982), 17-41.

<sup>141</sup> John Brereley, *The Protestants Apologie for the Roman Church* (St Omer: 1608), Tract. 1, §3.

<sup>142</sup> It must be stressed that even if some of the comments about Field cited by his contemporaries in these paragraphs should amount to, or appear to be, somewhat sycophantic admiration, I adduce them simply as objective evidence for how Field was once regarded.

<sup>143</sup> Added to the margin at §17 of the 'Preface to the Reader', at the place where White states '[f]or which cause [...] I have penned this booke', in all editions of *The Way to the True Church* from 1610. Spellings vary in these editions where noted above. The first edition of 1608 lacks this marginal note. (John White, *The Way to the True Church* (London: John Bill and William Barret, 1610), 'Preface to the Reader', §17, margin; or later editions (1612, 1616); or *The Workes of that Learned and Reverend Divine, John White* (London: John Bill and William Barret, 1624)).

## Chapter 4

### – Field’s Predecessors –

#### 4. Abstract of this chapter

One specific conclusion of this study is that Field has unfortunately been neglected in modern scholarship. The possibility should be acknowledged though, that whatever his intrinsic worth, Field only repeats, rather than supplements or augments, other previous writers. The Elizabethan era had seen a number of very worthy works written in defence of the Church of England of the Elizabethan settlement, by such notable figures as Jewel, Foxe, Bilson and Hooker. It might be wondered if Field in fact does not add anything useful beyond what these scholars wrote. In this chapter I shall take a sample of two, Jewel and Hooker, and show that Field does in fact significantly enhance the corpus.

#### 4.1 John Jewel (1522-1571)

In assessing whether Field’s *Of the Church* is a useful, or, alternatively, superfluous, supplement to the works of previous protestant writers, it is important to include a brief survey of John Jewel’s *Apologie*.<sup>1</sup> This seminal (and, in its age and beyond, highly important) work, defending the Church of England’s Elizabethan settlement against the charges of Rome, first appeared in Latin in 1562, and was immediately translated into English<sup>2</sup> by the exceptionally learned protestant Anne Bacon.<sup>3</sup> The work was reprinted several times in Britain, especially at the end of Elizabeth’s reign and the beginning of James’, when there was perceived by protestants to be renewed recusant Catholic pressure to be granted acceptance. Perhaps more importantly, written initially in Latin, it had

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<sup>1</sup> John Jewel, *Apologia Ecclesiae Anglicanae* (London: 1562); tr. by Anne (Cooke) Bacon as: *An Apologie, or Aunswer in Defence of the Church of England, with a brief and plain declaration of the true religion professed and used in the same* (London: 1562); *ibid.*, with dedicatory epistle by Matthew Parker to the translator, Anne Bacon (London: 1564); *ibid.*, (London: 1600); *ibid.*, in *The Works of John Jewel*, Bishop of Salisbury, ed. by John Ayre, 4 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press for the Parker Society, 1845-50); and many other editions; page numbers refer to the Parker Society edition, vol. 3 (1848), 52-108. The earliest editions did not have the author identified.

<sup>2</sup> The translator was unacknowledged in the 1562 English printed version, but this was amended in the 1564 edition of two years later when Archbishop Matthew Parker wrote a dedicatory epistle honouring her work.

<sup>3</sup> Anne Bacon, daughter of Sir Anthony Cooke (one of the tutors to Edward VI, who saw that his five daughters were well educated), was married to Sir Nicholas Bacon, the Lord Keeper of the Seal, and was the mother of Lord Francis Bacon.

Europe-wide circulation, to much acclaim. Its English translation was answered by Harding's *Answer*,<sup>4</sup> which in turn prompted Jewel's *Replie* and *Defence*.<sup>5</sup>

John Jewel, 1522-71, MA from Corpus Christi College, Oxford, 1544, BD 1551, bishop of Salisbury 1559, an assiduous scholar, was a friend of Peter Martyr Vermigli during the latter's tenure as divinity professor in the reign of Edward VI; but after initially accepting Mary's authority in matters of religion, Jewel repented of this and followed Vermigli to exile in Strasbourg. Returning at the accession of Elizabeth in 1558, he wrote the *Apologie* aged 40, and although he wrote much else, it became his most important and acclaimed work by far. Jewel is also remembered as having sponsored the Oxford education of Richard Hooker.

The *Apologie* is divided into six parts<sup>6</sup> and a summary.<sup>7</sup> The parts are, first, a lament at the historical defamation and loss of truth and true religion, secondly a summary of the doctrine of the Church of England; then a survey of the heresies of Christian history, followed by a critique of the corruptions of Rome and the pretensions of papal supremacy; fifthly and sixthly, an assertion of the novelty of Tridentine Roman doctrines as against the concordance of protestant theology with the ancient councils and fathers. Thus Jewel was at pains to charge Rome with novelty and corruption; but to defend the Church of England as being, in its theological position, ancient. In essence, then, nearly half a century before Field, Jewel concurs with Field's answer to the Roman question to the protestants, "Where was your church before Luther". They both answer in the same way, to the effect that the protestant church was ancient, and alive and well in the first five centuries of the Christian faith before the corruptions of Rome began to take hold; it is Rome that is the new church, whose distinctives are traceable back only a few centuries. Thus we must not think that Field is in the vanguard in this respect, although he sets out to demonstrate it to a considerably greater degree.

We must remember, too, that Jewel and Field faced different situations. Jewel wrote in the immediate aftermath, occasioned by her death, of the destruction of Queen Mary's hopes to restore Roman Catholicism permanently in the realm. Nearly three hundred protestants had been burnt for heresy. The accession of Queen Elizabeth was a bitter blow to the aspirations of the conservative bishops and theologians. In the face of their protestations, Jewel's *Apologie*, subtitled *in Defence of the Church of England*, was precisely and only that. When Field wrote, the Elizabethan settlement was half a century old. Hundreds of Catholics had been executed for treason (though not heresy).

<sup>4</sup> Thomas Harding, *An Answer to Maister Juelles Challenge* (Louvain: 1564; Antwerp: 1565).

<sup>5</sup> John Jewel, *A replie vnto M Hardinges ansveare* (London: 1565), and *A Defence of the Apologie of the Church of England* (London: 1567).

<sup>6</sup> The parts were not specified in early editions; this helpful division occurs in later editions.

<sup>7</sup> Various called in the several editions a *Recapitulation* or *Conclusion*.

With the establishment of the Roman Archpresbyterate in England, and especially with the accession of James I, there was renewed hope for increased toleration amongst the devotees of Rome.

However, Field does far more than Jewel. It is Field, for instance, who methodically demonstrates not only that protestant doctrines are ancient, being in accordance with the ancient councils and the writings of the fathers, but that all those doctrines had representatives within the Roman church in every age in unbroken continuation, even though those representatives might not have been free from other error. Similarly, it is Field who treats the church in terms of its various 'acceptations' (Field's term), according as to whether the *visible* church is in view (the actual church as visible to human view), or the *invisible* church (the aggregate of the elect, known to God alone), and Field delves into the intricacies of identifying a 'true' church in the world. Jewel does not enter into such fine distinctions, for his purpose lies elsewhere; his aim is to show plainly that, in his view, the protestant church is of antiquity, the Church of Rome novel. Both Jewel and Field emphasise scripture as being the supreme and final arbiter of truth. Field's valuing of scripture I have noted; Jewel does so emphatically too – one example will suffice: 'Nowadays the holy scripture is abroad, the writings of the apostles and prophets are in print, whereby all truth and catholic doctrine may be proved, and all heresy disproved and confuted'.<sup>8</sup>

Importantly, although both Jewel and Field attack Rome and defend the Church of England, Field does so in the context of developing a thoroughgoing systematic ecclesiology; Jewel not so. In fact, within the *Apologie*, Jewel has very little formal ecclesiology at all – one has to hunt down a doctrine of the church, as I shall now show.

The most prominent attention to the church is found in Part II of the *Apologie*, where a brief summary of the theological position of the Church of England is given under various doctrines. Commencing with a doctrine of the Trinity, this is followed by a brief account of the doctrine of the church. Jewel gives a concise ecclesiology over the course of just a few paragraphs, but it is a summary only. The unity, catholicity and universality of the true church are noted, which Field expatiates upon as well, as we have seen. The important ministry of deacons, priests and bishops is noted, with particular emphasis on their role 'to instruct the people'; that 'they should teach, they should publish abroad the gospel', so that 'might be opened the word of God',<sup>9</sup> with additional emphasis on the impropriety of the church's ministers appropriating power and eminence to themselves. But again, although this certainly echoes Field, Jewel's treatment is summary only.

<sup>8</sup> Jewel, *Apologie*, Parker Society edition, III, 57.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 59-61.

The concept of the 'notes' or 'marks' of the church, so important to Field, receives just two brief mentions by Jewel in his *Apologie*. First, in Part III, unity on its own is denied to be 'the [i.e., the one and only] sure and certain mark whereby to know the church of God',<sup>10</sup> on the grounds that there can be, and there frequently has been, unity in error. But although Jewel certainly does hold that the church should be marked by unity, he doesn't assess what else should be added to ensure that it is the true church that is thus marked out. An assessment of a sufficient set of marks is missing in Jewel. As we have seen, Field treats the marks thoroughly at length. Further on the subject of unity, Jewel responds in his Part IV to the charge of Rome, first 'that they [Rome] be the Church, that their Church is Christ's spouse, the pillar of truth', and secondly, 'that we be renegades; that we have torn Christ's seat',<sup>11</sup> that 'we are all heretics, and have forsaken the faith, and have with new persuasions and wicked learning utterly dissolved the concord of the Church'.<sup>12</sup> And yet, continues Jewel, 'this one thing are they never able truly to say, that we have swerved either from the Word of God, or from the Apostles of Christ, or from the primitive Church'.<sup>13</sup>

The second occasion where the church's marks are in mind is in Part IV, where, arguing against Rome, Jewel asks, 'let us know, I beseech you, what proper mark and badge hath that church of theirs, whereby it may be known to be the church of God', and he answers his own question, quoting Augustine, 'the Church must be showed out of the holy and canonical Scriptures: and that which cannot be showed out of them is not the Church'.<sup>14</sup>

None of the above should be taken to imply that somehow Jewel is inferior to Field. Both are highly important works; both address the defence of the Church of England against Rome; both have similar protestant themes of the originality of the protestant church and of its doctrine, and the novelty of Rome, and of the priority of scripture. But the similarity ends there. The *Apologie* is short and to the point,<sup>15</sup> and was written at a crucial point in the story of the Church of England, when the recent settlement needed such a defence (all this seen from the point of view of the protestants). Field's *Of the Church* by contrast is a very long, highly learned, thoroughgoing systematic ecclesiology, which the *Apologie* was never intended to be. Field doesn't replace Jewel, nor improve him; he simply does something largely (though not entirely) different, going considerably beyond Jewel's intentions.

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<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 69.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 77.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 53.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 77.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 82.

<sup>15</sup> But subsequent interchanges with his detractor, Thomas Harding, occupy vast numbers of pages.

## 4.2 Richard Hooker (1554-1600)

In respect of previous Elizabethan works writing on the church, the other notable predecessor to Field is Richard Hooker,<sup>16</sup> who published his *Of the Lawes of Ecclesiasticall Politie* in 1593<sup>17</sup> and 1597<sup>18</sup> (Books 1-4<sup>19</sup> and 5 respectively, the other Books appearing much later).<sup>20</sup> A still widely available popular twentieth century edition is the 'Everyman Library' edition of Books 1-5.<sup>21</sup> *Lawes* is a magisterial work of great renown and continuous publication, and the secondary literature on it is immense. The question which concerns us is whether its ecclesiological worth in any way renders Field's later contribution redundant, or at least not of sufficient value to justify bringing Field to greater scholarly notice. After all, it is Hooker who is prominent in the scholarly domain, Field barely in it at all – does he deserve a *redivivus*? In particular, does *Lawes* provide an ecclesiology in the way that Field's *Of the Church* does, and of the same nature, such that Field essentially repeats Hooker? I shall demonstrate that the answer is "No". It is of interest to note that when Field is writing, Hooker's work is of recent publication; further, *Lawes* is reprinted in new editions in 1604 and 1611, and Field is certainly aware of Hooker.

In fact, *Lawes* is not an ecclesiology at all. Rather, it offers a reasoned church polity by which he justifies the Church of England in its then current Elizabethan form, consequent upon the Elizabethan Settlement of 1558-59. 'Polity' is Hooker's preferred word. At the beginning of Book 3 (the one which

<sup>16</sup> Richard Hooker, 1554-1600, MA (Corpus Christi College, Oxford, 1577), ordained c.1581, St Paul's Cross preacher 1581, Master of the Temple 1585, Rector Boscombe 1591, then Bishopsbourne 1594.

Notable works by Hooker: *A Learned Discourse on Justification* (Oxford, 1612) (sermons of 1585); *Of the Lawes of Ecclesiasticall Politie* (8 books, I-IV 1593 or 94, V 1597, VI-VIII 1648, 1662, 1651); Keble's Edition of Hooker's works (Oxford University Press, 1836, 3 vols), 7<sup>th</sup> edition of this 1888; *Folger Library Edition*, ed. by W. Speed Hill, 6 vols, 1977-1998). The corpus of literature on Hooker is enormous; he is generally regarded as one of the foremost architects of early 'Anglicanism', along with Parker and Cranmer, though opinion differs amongst his commentators as to the extent to which he is 'Reformed' and Calvinistic.

Notable works on Hooker: Philip B. Secor, *Richard Hooker Prophet of Anglicanism* (Burns & Oates, 1999) is a modern biography and assessment. P. Collinson, 'Hooker and the Elizabethan establishment', in *Richard Hooker and the construction of Christian community*, ed. A.S. McGrade (1997), 149-81. P. Lake, *Anglicans and Puritans? Presbyterianism and English conformist thought from Whitgift to Hooker* (1988). D. MacCulloch, 'Richard Hooker's reputation', in *EngHR*, 117 (2002), 773-812. P.E. Hughes, *Faith and Works: Cranmer and Hooker on Justification* (1982). Kirby, W.J. Torrance, ed., *A Companion to Richard Hooker* (Leiden: Brill, 2008). See also various relevant works by P. Lake, P. Collinson, A. Milton, D. Neelands, P. Avis, D. MacCulloch.

<sup>17</sup> Richard Hooker, *Of the Lawes of Ecclesiasticall Politie Eyght Bookes* (London: John Windet, 1593).

<sup>18</sup> Richard Hooker, *Of the Lawes of Ecclesiasticall Politie. The Fift Booke* (London: John Windet, 1597).

<sup>19</sup> A second edition of these four Books, edited by John Spencer, also published by Windet, appeared in 1604. All five books were reprinted together with Spenser's epistle 'to the reader' in 1611, not long after Field's Book 5. Subsequently Hooker's *Lawes* and other works have repeatedly and frequently had new editions published continuously through to this day.

<sup>20</sup> Books 6 and 8 appeared in 1648 and Book 7 in 1662. The authenticity of Books 6-8 has been much debated, particularly Book 6 as its content seems to many to not match Hooker's stated intention, and particularly Book 7 at it was printed (by Gauden) from an avowedly rediscovered manuscript with no stated provenance or subsequent destiny. Current consensus is that although imperfect versions of what Hooker originally wrote, they do originate from Hooker himself; but the content of Book 6 (on penance) does not easily sit with its intended subject matter (power of jurisdiction), and may not properly belong to *Lawes*.

<sup>21</sup> Richard Hooker, *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity, Books I-V*, 2 vols (London: Dent, 1954), with an introduction by Christopher Morris; the original 'Everyman' edition was (London: Dent, 1907), with an introduction by Ronald Bayne.



concerns us the most) Hooker is wont to equate the words 'polity' and 'government'), declaring that his 'subject [. . .] is a form of church government or church polity', discussing 'in what respect laws of polity or government are necessary'.<sup>22</sup> Shortly thereafter, though, he states a preference for 'polity' over 'government': 'which word I therefore the rather use, because the name of government [. . .] doth not comprise the largeness of [. . .] both government, and also whatsoever besides belongeth to the ordering of the church. Neither is any thing in this degree more necessary than church polity'.<sup>23</sup> This gives us a clue as to the prime concern of Hooker in his *Lawes*.

It is the contention of this study that scholarship needs both Hooker and Field, and that neither makes the other superfluous in any way. The essential reason is that the two writers had different purposes, Hooker writing against puritan non-conformism, Field against Tridentine Rome. However, this would be too simplistic if stated merely thus. For Hooker himself was writing against Rome even whilst at Oxford. For instance, Hooker's two sermons on Jude date from then,<sup>24</sup> and they 'express anguish and trepidation at Roman Catholic attacks on the English church, especially those made by Englishmen themselves'.<sup>25</sup> Likewise, Hooker's *A Learned Discourse of Justification*,<sup>26</sup> delivered probably in 1586 after one year as Master of the Temple,<sup>27</sup> but published posthumously, is a defence of the protestant doctrine of justification by faith against Rome's doctrine.

Another early work is *A Learned and Comfortable Sermon of the Certaintie and Perpetuitie of Faith in the Elect*,<sup>28</sup> probably from a date close to the *Learned Discourse*,<sup>29</sup> does begin to challenge certain 'Reformed' doctrines, such as excessive emphasis (as Hooker saw it) on the necessity of demonstrable faith in the elect. It was at this stage that Hooker began to engage in controversy with the presbyterian-inclined puritan, Walter Travers, Hooker's fellow lecturer at the Temple. Thus Hooker's *A Learned Sermon of the Nature of Pride*,<sup>30</sup> preached at the Temple probably subsequent to the start of the conflict with Travers, further challenges aspects of Reformed theology. This debate, characterised by Fuller's famous aphorism, that 'the Pulpit spake pure Canterbury in the

<sup>22</sup> *The Works of that Learned and Judicious Divine Mr Richard Hooker*, ed. by John Keble, 7<sup>th</sup> edn, 3 vols, revised by R.W. Church and F. Paget (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1888), I, 338, §3.1.1. Hereafter in this section: *Works*.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 352, §3.1.14.

<sup>24</sup> Richard Hooker, *Two Sermons upon part of Judes Epistle* (Oxford: 1614).

<sup>25</sup> So writes A.S. McGrade in his *ODNB* article on Hooker. The two sermons can be found in vol. III of the Keble edition of Hooker's *Works*.

<sup>26</sup> Richard Hooker, *A Learned Discourse of Justification, Workes, and how the Foundation of Faith is Overthrowne* (Oxford: 1612).

<sup>27</sup> This dating is argued by Christopher Morris in his 'Introduction' to the mid-twentieth century 'Everyman Library' edition of Hooker's *Lawes* (I, 14, n.1), and McGrade concurs.

<sup>28</sup> Richard Hooker, *A Learned and Comfortable Sermon of the Certaintie and Perpetuitie of Faith in the Elect* (Oxford: 1612), printed in the same year and at the same press (Joseph Barnes) as the *Learned Discourse*.

<sup>29</sup> Because both sermons are based on the text Habakkuk 1:4.

<sup>30</sup> Richard Hooker, *A Learned Sermon of the Nature of Pride* (Oxford: 1612); also same year, same press.

Morning [Hooker], and Geneva in the Afternoon [Travers]',<sup>31</sup> escalated to the increasing discomfiture of Hooker, who consequently commenced writing his *Lawes*. Sponsored in this endeavour by Archbishop Whitgift, and departing from the Temple both to enable his writing and to escape the face-to-face controversy, he completed his '*Eyght Bookes*' shortly before his death in 1600 whilst then rector of Bishopsbourne, Kent.

This study cannot accommodate a full analysis of Hooker's *Lawes*, but a brief survey will demonstrate why I believe *the Lawes* and *Of the Church* are sufficiently distinctive to warrant both of them being valued in the arena of academic scholarship. They set out to achieve very different goals. Field states himself, as we shall see later, 'that there is no part of heavenly knowledge more necessary, than that which concerneth the Church',<sup>32</sup> and thus declares his resolve 'to communicate to others, what I had long since in private for my own satisfaction observed, touching the nature of the Church, the notes whereby it may be known, and the privileges<sup>33</sup> that pertain to it'.<sup>34</sup> What resulted after some years' writing is an immense systematic ecclesiology.

This observation does need modifying, however. Any systematic theology, of course, carries the danger of being imprinted with the author's concerns and favoured enthusiasms, because the author has the freedom to select, systematise and structure his writing according to his or her own preferences. Experience of reading many such works proves the point, and Field is no exception. Field has one major concern that drives his entire output, and at least two notable subsidiary concerns which serve this end. The major concern is his determination to defend the protestant Church of England as the (only) legitimate church in England, and accordingly to oppose the Tridentine Church of Rome as being heretical and schismatic. The subsidiary concerns are, first, to rehabilitate all other world manifestations of the Christian Church as legitimate and fundamentally sound (against the censure of Rome), and, secondly, to state that it is the papal faction of Rome that is his prime target, proving them to be the authors of Rome's heresy and schism, and proving that in fact the historic Church of Rome minus the papal faction remained a true protestant church (or at least various of its scholars and spokesmen held to all fundamental protestant Christian doctrines) continuously since the time of the apostles. I note this briefly here, and in due course will amplify at length. But I rehearse it here because, nonetheless, it remains true that Field's work is a from-first-principles and systematic (and unstintingly thorough) development of the doctrine of the church in Christian theology, despite much of it being shot through from beginning to end with an

<sup>31</sup> Thomas Fuller, *The History of the Worthies of England* (London: 1662), 264.

<sup>32</sup> (ED/I.xix).

<sup>33</sup> By the 'privileges' of the church Field means first, the 'assurances of everlasting love and happiness' ('proper to [...] the elect and chosen of God'), and secondly, ('communicable unto others') 'the rich treasure of heavenly truth', 'the office of teaching and witnessing the same truth', and such like (4.1/II.391).

<sup>34</sup> (ED/I.xxi).

amplification and defence of the substantive truth of Field's concerns in respect of Rome. In particular, much of Field's writing (in the final appendix and prefacing the revised appendix to Book 3) is directed specifically to answer his Roman detractors, although these portions do not properly belong to his systematic ecclesiology).

Turning to Hooker, we find a different task embarked upon. First, as noted above, Hooker's *Lawes* is not an ecclesiology of any stripe (although one can mine it piecemeal for a doctrine, or aspects of a doctrine, of the church, and I shall note this below). Rather, it sets out to present a justification for retaining the church polity inherent in the Elizabethan settlement. Secondly, it is specifically and avowedly written to oppose presbyterian, separatist and indeed any non-conformist tendencies, including the desire to continue to reform the Church of England as it then was in order to expunge perceived remnants of Romanism.

*Lawes* consists first of a 'Preface to them [the 'reformists'] that seek (as they term it) the reformation of the laws and orders ecclesiastical in the Church of England'.<sup>35</sup> He does indeed address these his opponents as 'ye', 'you', etc., not without considerable eirenicism for the most part. The Preface is almost entirely an introduction to Hooker's reaction to Calvin's 'discipline of Geneva'<sup>36</sup> and its dangers.

The first three of the eight Books of the *Lawes* concern the nature of law generally (Book 1), divine law in scripture (Book 2) and specifically laws in scripture concerning ecclesiastical polity (Book 3). Book 4 discusses the reformists' perceptions of 'popish' corruptions of church polity,<sup>37</sup> and Book 5 is concerned with alleged superstition remaining within the realm of the duties incumbent on the ordained clergy, such as preaching, the sacraments and the liturgy generally. Book 6, intended to be on the presbyterian polity of government by lay elders, is, as published not so, and, it is widely argued, its subject matter (on repentance) does not belong in Hooker's overall scheme. Book 7 touches upon jurisdiction in the church, and, particularly, that of bishops, and Book 8 upon princely jurisdiction. It is in Book 3,<sup>38</sup> though, that we find a short section offering a doctrine of the church not immediately determined by Hooker's agenda to defend conformity and oppose non-conformity, and it's the closest we find in Hooker to a systematic ecclesiology, albeit very brief and decidedly minimal. Hooker explains, 'Albeit the substance of [these] controversies [...] be rather of outward things appertaining to the Church of Christ, than of any thing wherein the nature and being of the

<sup>35</sup> Hooker, *Works*, I, 125-196, *Preface*.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid*, I, 137, *Preface*.2.6.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid*, I, 416, Book 4 superscription.

<sup>38</sup> 'Concerning their [Hooker's opponents] second assertion, that in scripture there must be of necessity contained a form of church polity, the laws whereof may in nowise be altered', *Ibid*, I, 337.

Church consisteth, yet [...] it therefore behoveth us so far forth to consider the nature of the church.<sup>39</sup> So Hooker deliberately digresses temporarily from his explicit aim to defend the Church of England's polity against that of the Genevan discipline, in order to establish, briefly, the beginnings of an ecclesiology. It occupies much of just one, the first, of the eleven sections of Book 3 under the title 'What the Church is',<sup>40</sup> fourteen pages out of the thirteen hundred or more occupied by the entire *Lawes* (but we concede that in mining all eight books for ecclesiological doctrine, piecemeal here and there, the total ecclesiological content will turn out to be considerably greater than that represented by this §1 of Book 3). But even before the end of this §1, Hooker begins to abandon the digression and return to exploring the implications of the Genevan polity.

In this section Hooker first establishes the distinction between the church mystical (the elect, known unequivocally only to God), and the church visible (the church as seen by human eyes, overlapping, but not coterminous with, the mystical church of true Christians). Field does this too, as we shall see. Proceeding, Hooker discusses how true Christians might be recognised as best as possible, and introduces the notion of 'marks or notes of distinction',<sup>41</sup> which in the case of the church mystical, God sees, but we cannot; in the case of the church visible, we can see, albeit fallibly. In the case of individual members of the church visible, even baptism cannot be an infallible mark of a true Christian – so Hooker is content to observe that 'we speak now of the visible Church, whose children are signed with this mark, "One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism"'.<sup>42</sup> Hence the unity of the church is important (as for Field), and the constancy of the Christian faith over time (as for Field, but not employing Field's concept of the 'succession' of faith). But unlike Field, who defines the church visible by a set of three notes or marks, Hooker does not use such a set of explicitly defined marks. If at all, it is the individual Christian who (should) exhibit marks, such as 'inward belief of heart; [...] hope; [and] Christian love and charity'.<sup>43</sup> Thus, seeking identification of members as being of the visible Church, if 'by external profession they be Christians, then they are of the visible Church of Christ', they, that is, 'whose mark of recognizance hath in it those things which we have mentioned, yea, though they be impious idolators, wicked heretics',<sup>44</sup> etc.

The point of the discussion of heretics is to move the argument towards the issue of how pure the visible church can be expected to be, and thus of whether baptisms by heretics should be considered invalid, as some had argued. But Hooker is adamant: the opposing argument is 'not sufficient to

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<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 338, §2.1.1.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 337-8, §2.1.Title.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 338, §2.1.2.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 342, §3.1.7.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*

prove that heretics were in no sort any part of the visible Church of Christ, and consequently their baptism no baptism'.<sup>45</sup> And by further consequence, it is clear that Hooker disavows any attempt to so purify the church by exclusion of heretics and the ministry of heretics that ground is given for the new discipline, which seeks to deny any credibility to the Church of Rome, and thus press for such further reform that all vestiges of Rome are removed completely. A church is still a church even though 'all parts have not been always equally sincere and sound'.<sup>46</sup> This is a mixed church: 'they [Rome] are in one respect enemies but in another beloved of God; [...] we dare not communicate concerning sundry her gross and grievous abominations, yet touching those main parts of Christian truth wherein they constantly still persist, we gladly acknowledge them to be of the family of Jesus Christ.'<sup>47</sup>

Now this latter argument about Rome seems at first sight to be one with Field's major preoccupation with opposing Rome, as we shall see in due course. And as for the content of the argument thus far, it is so. But nonetheless, Hooker is heading for a different final thrust: why does he insist that Rome, despite her grievous faults, is nonetheless a church? Answer: because 'there are which make the Church of Rome utterly no Church at all, by reason of so many, so grievous errors in their doctrines; so we have them amongst us, who under pretence of imagined corruptions in our discipline do give even as hard a judgment of the Church of England itself.'<sup>48</sup> And thus Hooker returns, after these few pages' diversion into neat ecclesiology, to his principal preoccupation. Such ecclesiology as he has formulated here amounts to an assessment of the essential difference between the church mystical and the church visible, and the implications thereof.

As already stated, other ecclesiological doctrinal content is of course discernible during the course of the eight books. It would be decidedly unfair to deny that an ecclesiology can be constructed from Hooker's writings. Of particular note is his material on bishops in Book 7. Although this, as the remainder of *Lawes*, is written in the context of his overarching defence of conformity, nonetheless Hooker's view, that 'if any thing in the Churches Government, surely the first institution of Bishops was from Heaven, was even of God',<sup>49</sup> and much like material, yields a cogent doctrine of episcopacy. McGrade in his *ODNB* article on Hooker makes the point that Hooker here 'makes a strong claim on behalf of *jure divino* episcopacy';<sup>50</sup> but as McGrade shows, a close reading of Hooker suggests that the office of bishop may not be totally immutable if a different polity were to be clearly indicated as

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<sup>45</sup> *Ibid*, I, 345, §3.1.9.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid*, I, 346, §3.1.10.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid*, I, 347, §3.1.10.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>49</sup> Hooker, *Works*, III, 168, §7.5.10.

<sup>50</sup> *ODNB* article on Hooker.

preferable for any given context (although this is, in Hooker's view, far from being the case in the context of Elizabethan England). 'Hooker's defence of episcopacy in book 7 of the *Laws* is thus, for all its vigour, a qualified one'.<sup>51</sup> Field's doctrine of the episcopacy we shall discuss later, but here we merely concede that as well as the brief, minimalistic beginnings of an ecclesiology in Book 3, we can add the material on bishops in Book 7.

None of the above is intended in any way to criticise Hooker in comparison with Field. They are both giants of scholarship who deserve awed recognition. My intention has been simply to demonstrate that with very different main preoccupations, justifying the Church of England against Genevan discipline (Hooker), and against Tridentine Rome (Field), they cannot be considered to be the same as each other – rather, they are complementary, each serving their stated purpose admirably. And Hooker's *Laws* is an ecclesiastical polity (albeit with a particular agenda), Field's *Of the Church* a systematic ecclesiology (albeit with a particular agenda).

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<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*

# **‘A Field the Lord hath Blessed’**

## **Section 2. Chapters 5-8: Field’s Writings – an Analysis**

This **Section 2** assesses Field’s written output, which consists of his one extant sermon, and his substantial work, *Of the Church, Five Bookes*.

**Chapter 5** analyses the sermon, particularly with reference to Field’s view of scripture.

**Chapter 6** analyses Field’s ecclesiology as represented in *Of the Church*, demonstrating how he builds his view of the church from first principles.

**Chapter 7** analyses Field’s view of the so-called ‘notes’, or ‘marks’ of the church, in contrast to those advocated by Rome.

**Chapter 8** concludes this section with an assessment of Field’s view of ministerial orders in the church.

## Chapter 5

### – Field’s *Learned Sermon* –

#### 5. Abstract of the chapter

Field was an admired and frequent preacher. Yet he only published one sermon – namely that which he preached before the king at the end of the delayed London coronation festivities of March 1604.<sup>1</sup> My analysis of the sermon in this chapter will be illustrative rather than exhaustive, but will pay attention to the salient points, insofar as they assist in building up a picture of Field. Principally I shall discuss Field’s reputation as a preacher and the careful structure and purpose of the sermon. But I shall also show how Field begins to develop a doctrine of scripture as being essentially the apostolic testimony to salvation in Christ. As a foil, towards the end of this chapter, I will seek to demonstrate how easy it is to misunderstand Field by comparing my analysis with that of the one other scholar who has paid significant attention to the sermon.

#### 5.1 Field’s reputation as preacher

THE blessed Apostle Saint Jude, finding that many in his time began well, and ended ill, who beeing seduced by wicked miscreants made shipwracke of the fayth, forsooke their first love, departed away from the living GOD, and embraced this present world: writeth this his Epistle generall to the Christians of those times, to strengthen the weake, confirme the doubtfull, and stay such as were ready to fall.<sup>2</sup>

Thus commences Field’s only published sermon, preached before the king on 16 March 1604, and published the same year. There is no record of Field’s having been ordered to publish by the king, although other preachers were; for example William Laud, John King and John Williams (two each), but principally Lancelot Andrewes (ten sermons printed by order), even though he himself ‘loathed the idea’.<sup>3</sup> That he chose to publish this single one might be explained by the notable nature of the occasion, namely James’ much-delayed coronation celebrations; nor do we know why Field was chosen to preach on this auspicious occasion. But we can only speculate as to why this sermon, and

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<sup>1</sup> Richard Field, DD, *A Learned Sermon preached before the King at Whitehall, on Friday the 16 of March* [1604] (London: 1604).

<sup>2</sup> *Sermon*, Sig. A3.

<sup>3</sup> According to Peter McCullough, in private correspondence to me.



no other of Field's, was ever printed – for the printing of sermons in this era was commonplace, and Field's sermons innumerable. Altogether 141 court sermons were printed during the reign,<sup>4</sup> but just the one of Field. We know he preached often at court; as chaplain in ordinary he would have spent one month a year at court, preaching through the month, and in thirteen years was chosen to be the Lent preacher at court too.<sup>5</sup> I have already mentioned his preaching at Gloucester, and before the king at Windsor and Winchester above.<sup>6</sup>

It should be noted that to be a royal chaplain at all was a distinct honour; to be chosen as Lent preacher brought even greater esteem. It also brought privilege, in that, e.g., a royal chaplain could hold up to three other ecclesiastical livings. Likewise Field would have preached constantly in the course of his various lectureships, readerships and parish duties. Regarding the latter we know of his reputation because Richard Kingsmill, though of Highclere, attended church in Burghclere (as did his nephew William Kingsmill of Sydmonton nearby) in order to hear Field's preaching. We know that Field was renowned (though not uniquely)<sup>7</sup> for his preaching, for a number of reasons, just as he was renowned for his scholarship and company. In 1610, Dudley Carleton commented, 'The Court Sermons have been well and exactly hitherto discharged, and our Oxford Men have proved the most prominent; Dr. King, Field, and Aiglionby, to do the best'.<sup>8</sup> Field's son Nathaniel observes that 'He was well skilled in the Knowledge of Schoole Divinitie, and yet withall he was a singular Preacher, though it be a rare thing for the same Man to attaine unto Perfection in both these Kinds'.<sup>9</sup>

I noted earlier Field's reputation at Lincoln's Inn, which is what prompted the admiration and favour he received from Richard Kingsmill, the renowned Surveyor of the Court of Wards. Field's reputation then reached court. We do not know what prompted the invitation he received from the then Lord Chamberlain Hunsdon to preach for the first time before Elizabeth, save that Hunsdon wrote: 'for Life and Learning [...] you have bin enabled unto me, by the Report and Judgment of such as seem to know you. [...] I wish that you will be readie to Preach in that Place [at court], that upon better Knowledge of your Sufficiencie you may understand Her Majesties farther Pleasure for your Approbation and Preferment to Her Service'.<sup>10</sup> Field's sermon then<sup>11</sup> clearly impressed the Queen,

<sup>4</sup> Peter McCullough, *Sermons at Court*, 8.

<sup>5</sup> 1599-1602, 1604 (the printed sermon), 1607-10, 1612-14, 1616.

<sup>6</sup> Section 2.2 above.

<sup>7</sup> Others, for comparison, would be John King (see shortly below) and Lancelot Andrewes, both favourites of King James.

<sup>8</sup> In a letter to a Sir Thomas Edmonds: John Nichols, *The Progresses [...] of King James*, II, 286-7. See also Peter McCullough, *Sermons at Court*, 134.

<sup>9</sup> *Memorials*, 4.

<sup>10</sup> In a letter to Field dated 6 September 1598 from the then Lord Chamberlain, G. Hunsdon, a copy of which was found amongst Field's papers after his death, which was transcribed by Nathaniel Field in *Memorials*, 7-8.

<sup>11</sup> Field preached his inaugural sermon before Elizabeth on 23 September 1598 (*Memorials*, 8; Peter McCullough, *Calendar of Sermons Preached at Court*).

for she admitted him chaplain in ordinary on 27 September 1598.<sup>12</sup> King James' pun upon Field's name on first hearing him preach, mentioned above,<sup>13</sup> as James (true to form) also punned upon the name of another favourite court preacher John King ('king of preachers'),<sup>14</sup> demonstrates his high opinion of Field's preaching, as well.<sup>15</sup> Moreover, he confirmed Field as his own chaplain and Field's immediate renown with him was such that, in the very year of his accession, he himself invited Field (or rather, commanded – 'require you [...] as that you faile not to attend')<sup>16</sup> to be present at the Hampton Court conference. Not only are we told that Field 'often Preached before King *James*, as being his Chaplaine in Ordinarie',<sup>17</sup> but that he was selected above others for out-of-the-ordinary preaching too, such as when the king was on a progress through Hampshire in 1609.<sup>18</sup>

## 5.2 The coronation celebration sermon – analysis

Field's reputation as a preacher matched his renown as a scholar, but nonetheless we have just the one published sermon (and none in manuscript). Field preached it exactly two months after the Hampton Court conference. But its 'occasion' was not this latter, but rather the 'royal entry to London' of 15 March 1604. This progress through London, with accompanying festivities, marked the coronation of James I on July 25 the previous year, the celebration having been delayed nearly a year because of an outbreak of plague in London. As James progressed through London,<sup>19</sup> seeking to be a passive observer and go unobserved himself, there were the lavish celebrations, involving eight pageants, of Thomas Dekker<sup>20</sup> and Ben Jonson,<sup>21</sup> and fireworks on the Thames.<sup>22</sup> On 16 March, Field

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> '[A] field for God to dwell in'. *Memorials*, 13.

<sup>14</sup> John King, d. 1621, bishop of London 1611. 'King established himself as one of London's foremost preachers, noted for Calvinist orthodoxy, moral rectitude, and strident anti-Catholicism' (*ODNB* article on John King, by Peter McCullough).

<sup>15</sup> We must note, though, that it was Lancelot Andrewes who seems to have been James' favourite preacher; James ordered some of Andrewes' sermons to be printed.

<sup>16</sup> The summons from court read '[...] his Majestie hath made Choice of you to be present and assist at the sayd Conference. These are therefore in His Majesties Name, to pray and require you so to dispose of your selfe, as that you faile not to attend His Majestie for that Purpose'. The letter, dated 27 August 1603, also found amongst Field's papers, is transcribed by Nathaniel Field in *Memorials*, 9.

<sup>17</sup> *Memorials*, 13.

<sup>18</sup> 'King *James* coming into Hamsheere the Byshop of Winchester being to appoint Preachers for the time of his being there, taking notice of his Worth and Sufficiencie wrote unto him to Preach before him, as thinking that the King would be as well pleased to heare him as any Man' (*Memorials*, 13).

<sup>19</sup> An account of the celebrations can be found in John Nichols, *Progresses of King James*, I, 337-424.

<sup>20</sup> See Thomas Dekker, *The Magnificent Entertainment: given to King James [...] upon the day of his Majesties tryumphant passage [...] through [...] London* (London: 1604). Dekker (c.1572-1632), dramatist and pamphleteer, not thought well of by Jonson, nonetheless collaborated with him in producing the celebrations for James.

<sup>21</sup> See Ben Jonson, *B. Ion: his part of King James his royall and magnificent entertainment through his honorable cittie of London, [...] London*: Edward Blount, 1604), or in *The Cambridge edition of the works of Ben Jonson*, ed. D. Bevington, and others, 7 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012). Jonson (1572-1637), poet and playwright who wrote extensively in James' reign for court entertainment and for the theatres of what is now the 'South Bank' of the Thames.

<sup>22</sup> See Gilbert Dugdale and Robert Vaughan [engraver], *The Time Triumphant, Declaring in briefe, the Arival of our Sovereigne Liedge Lord, King James into England, His Coronation at Westminster: Together with his late royal progresse, from the Towre of London through the Cittie, to his Highnes mannor of White Hall* (London: 1604). See also Stephen Harrison and William Kip [engraver], *The Arch's of Triumph Erected in honor of the High and mighty prince James the*

preached before the King at Whitehall Palace, where he had arrived at the end of the previous day's progress.

We do not know why Field was chosen for this special occasion, but we do know that Field's preaching had already found favour with James, he having been confirmed as chaplain on James' accession. In fact, originally Field had been chosen as one of the two possible preachers for the Friday a week later, the chaplains originally chosen for 16 March being 'Do<sup>r</sup> [George] Abbot [...] or do<sup>r</sup> [Richard] Eedes'.<sup>23</sup> We do not know why Field was brought forward a week. The sermon is an exposition, clause by clause, of the Bible verse Jude 3.

Analysis of the sermon immediately throws up a point of interest, in that it appears Field is using the Geneva Bible translation – which, although very popular amongst the people (and remaining so for a long time even after the publication of the King James Version), was not generally favoured, and not authorised, in ecclesiastical (or royal) circles. In his second sentence Field refers to 'these words, which I have now read in your hearing',<sup>24</sup> probably from memory because of some minor discrepancies, noted below, from the Geneva Bible. In the sermon Field explicitly repeats the phrase 'the maintenaunce of the fayth',<sup>25</sup> so I conclude that the version is Field's choice deliberately. We know it is the Geneva Bible quoted, because of these words ('the maintenance of'), which are a unique Geneva interpretative addition without precedent in any previous version (or any later, to this day) or in the Greek text – critical apparatus of the Greek manuscript texts supplies none such. It appears, then, that Field was not so 'conformist' as to abrogate this officially unfavoured translation, which was certainly the preferred translation amongst puritans and other evangelical clergy. On the other hand, Field was not alone. We know that Archbishop Whitgift employed the Geneva Bible in his debate with Cartwright – an irony that was not lost on Cartwright, nor on Whitgift himself. We might notice another surprise, however, in that there are traces of the Romanist Rheims NT in Field's version, in the words 'necessarie' and 'delivered',<sup>26</sup> which are in no other version prior to KJV. Clearly Field is quoting the verse from memory, entirely typical for him, mainly from Geneva, with nods to Rheims but not specifically to any other translation.

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*first [...] at his Majesties Entrance and passage through [...] London upon the 15<sup>th</sup> day of march 1603* [i.e., 15 March 1603/04] (London: 1604). Stephen Harrison was responsible for the creation of the seven wooden arches, which were removed after the ceremonies.

<sup>23</sup> *Calendar of Court Sermons*, 106-7. Richard Eedes preached the sermon on Friday 23 March, and not either of the two who had been appointed for that date, 'Do<sup>r</sup> [Roger] Bradshawe / or Do<sup>r</sup> Fielde'.

<sup>24</sup> *Sermon*, Sig. A3.

<sup>25</sup> *Sermon*, Sigs B4, B8v and C6v.

<sup>26</sup> All other versions up to this point have 'needful' where Field has 'necessarie' and Rheims 'under a necessity', and 'given' or (Wyclif) 'taken', where Rheims and Field have 'delivered'. The words 'contend for' date from Bishops' Bible onwards; previous translations have 'labour in' or (Wyclif) 'strive for'. The only other, very minor, discrepancy is that Field and Rheims have 'you' in place of the final 'ye'.

### Field's 'Learned Sermon' – Structure

**Beloved;** when I gave all **diligence** to write unto you of the common salvation; it was **necessarie** for me to write unto you to exhort you, that you should earnestly contend for the maintenance of the Faith, which was once delivered unto the Saints.

#### [1] 'Beloved'

- [1.1] Love enjoined of all rulers
- [1.2] Love enjoined of the clergy
- [1.3] Three exemplars

#### [2] 'Diligence'

- [2.1] Multiplicity of the apostles' diligence
  - [2.1.1] List of various ministries
  - [2.1.2] The apostle Paul a prime exemplar
- [2.2] Sedulity of the apostles' diligence
  - [2.2.1] In season
  - [2.2.2] Out of season
- [2.3] Different manner of the apostles' diligence
  - [2.3.1] By word being present
  - [2.3.2] By letter being absent
    - [2.3.2.1] Benefit of writing generally
    - [2.3.2.2] Benefit of sacred writing

#### [3] 'Necessary'

- [3.1] Things indifferent – do not contend
- [3.2] Things mistaken – do not contend
- [3.3] Matters of faith – contend
  - [3.3.1] Earnestly
  - [3.3.2] For the maintenance of the faith
    - [3.3.2.1] Once delivered
    - [3.3.2.2] To the saints

### 5.3 Field's analytical method

As soon as we commence reading Field's sermon we encounter one aspect of Field's standard analytical method, which is to divide and subdivide his material, most often in threes in the sermon, ensuring that he meticulously covers every point he considers material to his argument. In addition, he often starts at a general level and then proceeds to the more specific. An early example will illustrate this. Jude 3, in Field's version, reads thus, italics mine for emphasis, and punctuation mine for clarity:

*Beloved*; when I gave all *diligence* to write unto you of the common salvation; it was *necessarie* for me to write unto you to exhort you, that you should earnestly contend for the maintenance of the faith, which was once delivered unto the saints.

Typically for Field, he chooses to make three main points about Jude 3 ('wherein three things are to be observed') under his major headings, by picking three words out of the Bible verse: [1] 'beloved' – from where he shows Jude's love for his readers ('he maketh knowne unto them his love') and argues the necessity of this same love in the ministers of God's people always; [2] 'diligence' – '[Jude's] carefull and diligent study and endeavour', and [3] 'necessarie' – 'It was necessarie for me to write unto you'.<sup>27</sup> For him, these are the key words in the three sections of the verse.<sup>28</sup> The ensuing pages that he devotes to these three headings, roughly in the ratio 1:3:5, reflect the length of those sections in the verse. Likewise, he sub-divides the first of his main headings, 'beloved', into three sub-sections. In one initial paragraph [1.1] he generalises the need for all rulers to love those under their care. Secondly, in a paragraph [1.2] three times the length of the first (I shall find this significant and comment below), he makes the same point with specific reference to the clergy of his and every age as having the care of God's people. Thirdly [1.3], Field offers three examples: Jesus Christ, and also the Bible characters Moses and Paul, are exemplars – three of them! – of this required love. This division and sub-division and sometimes sub-sub-division (most often into threes) is entirely typical of Field – though, of course, not unique to him.<sup>29</sup>

My numbering system for all the points and sub-points may not commend itself to some readers, but it does accurately reflect Field's intricate structure. I include it not only for clarity,<sup>30</sup> but to show in due course that Field is always driving this sermon to a final dénouement, namely the fundamental

<sup>27</sup> All from *Sermon*, Sig. A3v.

<sup>28</sup> As separated by semi-colons above, which are my re-punctuation of the verse for clarity. This numbering of the points and all sub-points is mine also, to help us keep track of Field's sub-points. The sermon, with all my numbering (and also page divisions) included, is in an appendix to this study.

<sup>29</sup> Triads were a common device, back then in Field's day, and indeed are found frequently in classical and biblical literature.

<sup>30</sup> Although Field himself does not number his points here, he does frequently do so, including sub-points sometimes, in his *Of the Church*.

importance of scripture. He drives the second [2] main point towards the final sub-point [2.3.2.2], which itself highlights the importance and centrality of 'sacred writing'. Then this final sub-point itself anticipates, and drives the argument forward to, the third main point [3] – namely that scripture, 'once delivered to the saints', is definitively necessary for the formulation of Christian doctrine, and then the maintenance of that doctrine throughout Christian history. And once we arrive at the third main point, we find that Field operates a progression within it whereby the successive clauses and phrases of Jude 3 anticipate the later ones in a crescendo of importance. For clarity, we may represent this progression as follows, and I shall demonstrate the importance of it in due course:

- (a) Second main point [2], 'diligence': all initial sub-points ([2.1.1] through to [2.3.2.1]) drive towards final sub-point [2.3.2.2].
- (b) In turn, this final sub-point [2.3.2.2] anticipates and introduces the third main point [3].
- (c) Third main point [3]: 'necessarie to write' >> 'to exhort' >> 'earnestly contend' >> 'maintenance of the faith' >> (i) 'faith once delivered' and (ii) 'to the saints'.

Field's second major heading sub-divides rather more than the first, and successively. The [2] 'diligence' of the Apostle Jude (and of all 'the Apostles, and Apostolike men in the worke of the Ministry'),<sup>31</sup> divides first into three sub-divisions [2.1-3].<sup>32</sup>

As an aside here, but relevant more generally, the addition of 'Apostolike men' in this formula is Field's device for ensuring that no criticism of the protestant view of scriptural authority can be made regarding the NT books not authored immediately by an apostle, such as Luke's gospel. Field insists that the entire apostolic band, including all the apostles' 'co-adjutors', bequeathed the scriptures – so that, in Field's view, the entire NT has absolute apostolic authority, it all being written in the time of the apostles and under their guidance.

Again, there is a sub-division of each of these three sub-divisions into two. On [2.1], 'the multiplicitie of the thinges', Field starts at the general level of all the apostles [2.1.1], listing the diverse 'varietie of the things, they do for the good of them, whom GOD hath committed to theyr charge'.<sup>33</sup> But secondly [2.1.2], he moves again from the general to the specific example of the Apostle Paul, and Field gives a long list of the aspects of his ministry, commencing '[he] sometimes disputeth, sometimes exhorteth, sometimes commaundeth, sometimes entreateth, [etc., over twenty items]'.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>31</sup> *Sermon*, Sig. A5v.

<sup>32</sup> Viz: '[1] the multiplicitie of the thinges, they do for the working of this intended good: [2] the sedulitie in doing them: and [3] the divers manner of doing of them' (*Sermon*, Sig. A6).

<sup>33</sup> *Sermon*, Sig. A6.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*

Lists, sometimes very lengthy, sometimes numbered by Field himself, are entirely typical for Field. On 'the sedulitie' [2.2] with which the apostles perform their ministry, Field mentions two things, namely 'they doe them in season [2.2.1], and out of season' [2.2.2].<sup>35</sup> The third sub-division [2.3], the apostles' 'divers manner' of their ministry, he again divides into two, namely 'by [vocal] word being present [2.3.1], and by [written] Letters being absent [2.3.2]'.<sup>36</sup> But now he discourses at length about the second element of this sub-sub-division, the apostles' writing (in general) and Jude's (in particular), anticipating here his later treatment of the third major point from the essential clause in Jude 3, 'It was necessarie for me to write unto you'.<sup>37</sup>

This is important: Field is driving his argument forward, and noting that there is a final objective to his sermon, essentially asking "Why was it 'necessarie'?" But before he gets to this third point, he commends the 'benefit of writing' – and, again, he starts with a generality before moving to sacred writing in particular.<sup>38</sup> He first [2.3.2.1] extols writing in general as of value to mankind (and to this end he names approvingly four Greek philosophers, but especially those who wrote for posterity – such as Plato and Aristotle). But even here he cannot resist anticipating his next sub-sub-sub-point by extolling the more particular benefit to the church of the body of writings of the confessors and fathers of the church<sup>39</sup> (whom he calls 'lights' – very much as Joseph Hall called Field and other contemporaries 'lights' in his 1623 sermon)<sup>40</sup> which Field calls the 'the holy library of the church'.<sup>41</sup> Indeed, taken as a whole, this holy library, consisting of the writings of scripture ('the Patriarches, Prophets, Apostles') and of the writings of subsequent Christian worthies ('Martyrs, Confessors, Fathers of the Church')<sup>42</sup> constitute 'a greater & more generall [i.e. ecumenical] councill, then [. . .] any of the emperors did'.<sup>43</sup>

This is significant, because Field does hold the first six ecumenical councils in high esteem. Clearly, it has been one major aim of the sermon hitherto to extol sacred writing, and then, as we shall see, discourse upon its value. And then, secondly [2.3.2.2], Field moves specifically from the 'generall'<sup>44</sup> 'to the more especiall consideration of sacred writing and the object of it'.<sup>45</sup> Clearly, Field himself

<sup>35</sup> *Sermon*, Sig. A6v.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>37</sup> *Sermon*, Sig. A7.

<sup>38</sup> '[W]e are occasioned to speake first of wryting in generall: and secondly of sacred wryting, & and the obiect of it' (*Sermon*, Sig. A7).

<sup>39</sup> 'By it we may commune withall the Patriarches, Prophets, Apostles, Martyrs, Confessors, Fathers of the Church (the lights and wonders of the world)' (*Sermon*, Sig. A7). [cf. Hall's sermon about his generation of theologians being lights.]

<sup>40</sup> Alluded to in the chapter 'Field's Erudition' in this study.

<sup>41</sup> *Sermon*, Sig. A7v.

<sup>42</sup> *Sermon*, Sig. A7.

<sup>43</sup> Viz: the first six (at least) ecumenical councils. *Sermon*, Sig. A7.

<sup>44</sup> *Sermon*, Sig. A7v.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*

knows that he is employing this literary device of generalising and then narrowing down the focus. We shall see soon that Field's extolling of sacred writing is quite deliberate, as an answer to the Romanists who, he avers, 'deserve exceeding ill'<sup>46</sup> for their failure to give the scriptures their proper place.<sup>47</sup> We shall return to the subject of the scriptures shortly, as Field himself returns there (twice).

The sub-division device, reaching at least four levels (arguably six in his second main point, if one analyses it even more finely), although not unique to Field, does indicate the punctilious, perfectionist streak in him which is evident throughout his writings. He certainly has a pedantic, painstaking method.<sup>48</sup> When Field replies to his later critics (who have criticised his 1606 volume, *Of the Church*, Books 1-4), in his final appendix<sup>49</sup> (published with his Book 5 in 1610) and later in a further reply to Brereley<sup>50</sup> (published with the appendix to Book 3 in 1628), he responds to his opponents' points paragraph by paragraph in a similar thorough way (as they have done to him). This is entirely typical of many of the protestant and recusant writers in their many interchanges.

Field's meticulous classification of his points may for some be hard (and exasperating) to follow in its intricate n-fold sub-divisions, and keeping track may exhaust the modern humanities scholar! A scholar whose academic life commenced in the field of mathematics<sup>51</sup> will not be so dismayed, however, at the challenge of following Field's argument – for it is this discipline above all that exults in the propositional and predicate logic which had its beginning in Aristotelian philosophy and which underpinned all scholarship, including theology, in Field's age. We must remember that in those days a study of logic and philosophy is how an Oxford student's learning commenced and continued up to MA-level, and clearly Field is supremely at home in this discipline. Indeed, it is recorded by Thomas Frith that, after graduating BA, Field was an acclaimed 'daily Reader of Logick and Philosophy'<sup>52</sup> at Magdalen Hall. This incessant categorising and listing of things, and the propensity to start an argument far back 'at first principles' (reaching the main point of argument only after a rigorous and exhaustive treatment of all intervening stages) is not Field's preserve alone – but he is, nonetheless, the epitome of it in my opinion.

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<sup>46</sup> *Sermon*, Sig. A7v.

<sup>47</sup> '[T]he Romanistes deserve exceeding ill, that did formerly, & doe presently adulterate the monuments of antiquitie, and leave nothing sincere, and uncorrupt, as their manifold forgeries in former times, their Index expurgatorius and other like practises of these times make it too plaine' (*Sermon*, Sig. A7v).

<sup>48</sup> I do not mean this pejoratively.

<sup>49</sup> The recusants Richard Broughton, Edward Maihew and Theophilus Higgons (5.App.ER/iv.257).

<sup>50</sup> (3App.Answer/ii.5)

<sup>51</sup> Such as myself.

<sup>52</sup> Anthony Wood's 1691 translation into English (*Athenae*, 1691, i.349; or 1721, i.410; or ed. Bliss, 1815, ii.181) of Thomas Frith's entry on Field, in Latin, in his *Liber Collegii*, transcribed in Elias Ashmole's *Antiquities of the County of Berks*, iii, 266-7, or in *Memorials*, iv.



## 5.4 Working from first principles

I wish not to labour this point, but an important interaction with the other modern writer I have mentioned above, Jones-Davies, will arise in connection with Field's methodology, and this will repay some study later in this chapter. I refer most particularly to Field's propensity to start 'from first principles', commencing with the general and moving to the specific. In every case his treatment of the general is relatively brief, and illustrative, compared with the main attention given to what follows; a springboard from which to reach his main point. Take, for example, the way he develops his study of the church in his *Of the Church*, Book 1 – which concerns what the church is and how it is demarcated as an identifiable entity. He does not begin, as we might expect, with his conception of the church consisting of Christian believers, even though this is almost the entire subject of all his writing. Rather, he starts from first principles (God's 'church', as he calls it even back then, immediately after creation but pre-fall) and develops towards his main goal. Somewhat unusually, the first chapter of Book 1 calls the company of angels, together with newly created 'men', 'church'; and because he will ultimately arrive at an understanding of the church that it is 'called' (i.e., 'elect') of God, so his 'first-principles' church consists of men and angels who are 'called out' by God 'from the rest of his creatures'<sup>53</sup> and so are a 'holy church'.

This is typical Field. The notion of a continual 'church' is important to him – as, for example, where he writes 'we must not think, that God was without a Church among men at any time'.<sup>54</sup> By this principle Field confidently asserts that Adam, 'repent[ed] after his fall and return[ed] to God'<sup>55</sup> – and for this bold assertion he, atypically, relies on an extra-biblical authority, Wisdom 10:1.<sup>56</sup> In *Of the Church*, it is one of Field's prime contentions, as we shall see in the next chapter, that God has had a constant church, in perpetuity, ever since creation, even down through the centuries of the western Christian church – even within the Church of Rome, the immediate predecessor of the Church of England. Without this argument Field would have no basis for arguing for the validity of the reformed church in England. I shall demonstrate Field's development of his ecclesiology at length in the next chapter.

Why is it important to Field that he commences back at creation, developing from there onwards his notion of the indefectibility of the church? The answer, to me, is clear. He is heading towards the most fundamental assertion of all his writings, namely that the current protestant church and its evangelical faith (particularly as represented by the Church of England) was present, albeit hidden,

<sup>53</sup> (1.1/1.8)

<sup>54</sup> (1.3/1.16)

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>56</sup> In the OT Apocrypha, part of the Roman canon, but not considered part of the protestant Bible in Field's era.

uninterrupted throughout all Christian history from the fathers through to the present day. It was even definitively present in the Church of Rome, albeit only represented by a few – and those few were not without some faults and error in some respects, as well as being obscured and even abjured by the ‘prevailing faction’ of the papists. We shall come to this in due course in our major study of the church, but mark it here in anticipation. This reality of the protestant church continuing indefectibly (as Field sees it), together with his corresponding belief that the pope and all his spokesmen have for centuries led the church into damnable error, is his overriding concern in all he writes – and we see it in the sermon too, as I shall observe below. And I return to the sermon now.

### 5.5 The testimony of the apostles as the ‘rule of faith’

Recalling that, in his intricate sub-dividing, Field has reached point [2.3.2.2],<sup>57</sup> we find that here he has arrived at the zenith of this second section on the ‘diligence’ of Jude. Points [2.1.1] through to [2.3.2.1], occupying just four pages, are all preliminaries – significant, but brief: working from first principles, dealing with the general, anticipating the most important point in his argument, and eventually reaching it. And that most important point is: the value and authority of the sacred apostolic writings of the scriptures<sup>58</sup> (which he has already visited briefly, as noted above). This point, [2.3.2.2], occupies eight pages and immediately we discover his reason for having headed towards it. In the apostles’ times, he argues, their writings were valued even if their personal presence and oratory may not have been very impressive (e.g. Paul).<sup>59</sup> And again we immediately find that this observation is prompted by his rejection of the opposite opinion of Rome, namely that it is the apostles’ writings which are questionable, but their oral tradition (as understood, or reimagined, in Field’s opinion) commendable – and Field shows at length how a very great proportion of Rome’s tradition is far from going back to the apostles. The force of Field’s reasoning is as clear here as elsewhere.<sup>60</sup> ‘This their censure of the divine Scriptures is injurious [...] impious [...] inconsiderate’,<sup>61</sup> another three sub-points.

The matter I wish to stress here is that Field is clearly stating his identification of the ‘rule of faith’ which defines Christian doctrine. For him it is scripture, whereas oral tradition is unreliable as a guide. But, he avers, for the Romanists, the reliable guide is tradition, the unreliable is scripture. For

<sup>57</sup> In my attempt at a helpful numbering system.

<sup>58</sup> Field uses the terms ‘divine scriptures’ and ‘sacred writings’ interchangeably in this sermon.

<sup>59</sup> *Sermon*, Sig. A7v-A8.

<sup>60</sup> E.g., ‘But now contrariwise the Romanistes regarde not their writings, but magnifie their words, delivered by tradition, charging their writings with obscuritie, insufficiency, and imperfection, comparing them to a shipmans hose, a nose of wax, a Lesbian rule; affirming that but fewe things were written [...] not to commaund & over-rule our faith, but to be over-ruled by it [...] The absurditie of which concept will appeare’ (Sig. A8-A8v). A Lesbian rule is a builder’s flexible rod, used for forming curves during construction, made of pliable lead from Lesbos. Field’s point is self-evident!

<sup>61</sup> *Sermon*, Sig. A7v-A8.

Field, stating the protestant position, scripture is to 'commaund and over-rule our faith',<sup>62</sup> whereas Rome insists the apostles 'meant not to compose a perfect worke, containing the rule of our faith'.<sup>63</sup> For Rome, scripture is 'over-ruled by'<sup>64</sup> tradition. For Field, the apostolicity of the church depends not upon the *traditions* deriving from apostolic times, but upon the *writings* of the apostles; or rather, it is the latter which consummates 'the rule of faith', together with the OT.<sup>65</sup> This we shall investigate in the next chapter, where Field delineates the true church, as being, amongst other things, apostolic. Such *is* the Church of England; and such *is not* the Church of Rome, in Field's view.

In this much longer section [2.3.2.2] on the sacred scriptures, Field discourses on the variety of *content* of the apostles' writings,<sup>66</sup> noting their authority and sufficiency, e.g., for the 'clearing of [...] questions, and doubts';<sup>67</sup> then upon their *object*, namely 'salvation' – which is 'the greatest benefit that ever God bestowed on men, and the principall matter and object of the divine Scriptures'.<sup>68</sup> Quoting Gregory Nazianzen's 'divine exchange' device, Field waxes lyrical about this salvation: 'in the restauration [i.e., salvation] hee maketh an exchange with us, [...] he taketh our sinne and giveth us his righteousnes, [...] he taketh our death and giveth us his life, he humbleth himselfe and exalteth us'.<sup>69</sup> Following this, Field comments on Jude's use of the word 'common', insisting first that it does *not* mean 'common to all people', against the likes of Origen's universalism,<sup>70</sup> and against other ancient errors<sup>71</sup> which, although restricting salvation to Christian believers, either include those in culpable heresy or schism or (unrepentant) wickedness of life,<sup>72</sup> or admit of the possibility of a 'purging fire after this life'<sup>73</sup> apart from the gospel. The fine distinction between these errors need not concern us, save only to note that this serves as yet another cue for Field to write against the Romanists – in this instance against the doctrine of purgatory. Field acknowledges that this doctrine had its beginning in Augustine having 'doubtfully' spoken of it, but insists that 'Austine never dreamt

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<sup>62</sup> *Sermon*, Sig. A8.

<sup>63</sup> *Sermon*, Sig. A8.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>65</sup> The term 'rule of faith' is used much in Field's writings, always referring to the core, non-negotiable substance of the Christian faith.

<sup>66</sup> *Sermon*, Sig. A8v.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>68</sup> *Sermon*, Sig. B1.

<sup>69</sup> *Sermon*, Sig. B1v. The full quotation is: 'in the restauration hee maketh an exchange with us, he taketh the worst we have, and giveth us the best he hath, he taketh our nature, and giveth us his grace, he taketh our sinne and giveth us his righteousnes, he taketh our curse and giveth us his blessing, he taketh our misery and giveth us his happines, he taketh our death and giveth us his life, he humbleth himselfe and exalteth us.'

<sup>70</sup> Who held 'that all [...] after certaine revolutions of times shall be saved' (*Sermon*, Sig. B1v).

<sup>71</sup> *Sermon*, Sig. B1v-B2.

<sup>72</sup> *Sermon*, Sig. B2, this error being 'that not all men, but all Christian men, notwithstanding whatsoever wickednes, Schisme or Heresie shall in the end bee saved'.

<sup>73</sup> *Sermon*, Sig. B2v.

of' the 'Romanistes faith', holding that sin can be 'consumed away in this purging fire', imagining 'that the justice of God in it is satisfied'.<sup>74</sup> For Field this denies the gospel of grace.

My own point in these observations is this: that Field incessantly takes any opportunity to oppose the doctrine and practice of the Church of Rome. At risk of over-simplification, Field has two goals. One is the *positive* goal of delineating and justifying the protestant church and its faith – and it is the purpose of this study to offer an introduction to, and an analysis of, Field's view of the true church as being the protestant church. But Field's other goal – his *negative* (or as Field might say, *privative*) goal – is resolutely and stridently to oppose Rome. Field makes it clear in the way he continues his sermon that Rome has subverted the gospel. And here, as previously in his introductory sections (alluded to above), he does not miss his opportunity. Thus it comes as no surprise to the reader of Field that he so inevitably sets his own view of scripture here against Rome's. To Field, all the heretical doctrines and erroneous practices of Rome stem from uncertain 'tradition', which in any case is, he insists, usually late in its inception (though often of uncertain start-date). In contrast, the protestant faith, founded upon – and only upon – sacred scripture (conveyed to posterity by the apostles), is early and authentic.

## 5.6 Salvation as the key message of the scriptures

According to Field, then, 'common' as used by Jude means, 'not absolute unto all, but unto [*all* them, but *only*] them that are called, and sanctified of GOD, and reserved in Christ Jesus'<sup>75</sup> – common, that is, to all right-believing Christians who are not in schism or heresy or whose faith is not the feigned faith of wickedly led lives. Jude's use of the word 'common' is, in Field's view, to stress that although *some* spiritual things are not common to all Christians (for instance, spiritual gifts,<sup>76</sup> which some possessed in the apostles' time, but not others; or 'degrees of ministrie'<sup>77</sup> which are reserved for the ordained ministers of the church), what is certainly common to all right-believing Christians is the gospel of God's grace and salvation.<sup>78</sup> (We shall see the importance of the ministry in Field's conception of the church in the next chapters, but his observation here is that it is not universal amongst the company of believers.) We need to emphasise at this point that, for Field, salvation is the entire object of the divine scriptures. The 'bookes of God'<sup>79</sup> essentially contain just three things,

<sup>74</sup> *Sermon*, Sig. B2v.

<sup>75</sup> *Sermon*, Sig. B3, italics mine.

<sup>76</sup> The 'gyfts of tongues, myracles, prophecie' (*Sermon*, Sig. B3v).

<sup>77</sup> *Sermon*, Sig. B3v.

<sup>78</sup> If I am labouring this point, it is because Field does! '[T]he covenants of Grace, the sufferings of Christ, regeneration, the Gospell, the giving of the Spirit, Faith, Hope, Love, and eternall Salvation are common unto all, that are called, and sanctified of GOD, not [...] a certaine measure, but every one taketh as much of them as he will' (*Sermon*, Sig. B3v).

<sup>79</sup> *Sermon*, Sig. B1.

namely '[i] the creation, [ii] the fall, & [iii] the restauration & salvation of man'. Given that the first two of these occupy just three chapters of the Bible, before [iii] commences, we conclude that Field has a case for highlighting salvation as being the essential message of scripture. But we note also that, because of his emphasis on this point in the sermon, we must look to the doctrine of salvation and the biblical record of it as supplying both the principal aetiology of the sermon and its stress on salvation throughout well over half of it. I shall attend to this later.

### 5.7 Contending for the faith

Hitherto, Field has shown the diligence of the Apostle Jude in writing of the 'common salvation', recorded and presented by the apostles in the authoritative and sufficient sacred scriptures. This has been the second section of his sermon, culminating in the lengthy sub-section which I have numbered [2.3.2.2]. But although throughout section [2] he has been aiming at this final sub-point, even this is not an end in itself, for it purposely anticipates section [3]. In fact it is the final sub-point of Field's second section on 'diligence' which cues him to show that it was 'necessarie' for Jude to write his epistle, urging his readers that they 'should earnestly contend for the maintenance of the Faith, which was once delivered unto the Saints'. Field thus urges his hearers to do the same, because contending for the faith entails contending for the scriptures that define the faith – over against the devotees of Rome who have slighted the scriptures and extolled their own traditions.

Field now devotes the remainder of the sermon (over half of it in fact) to this third major point: the urgency of contending for the faith. But Field distinguishes between things which *are* contended for, but should *not* be, and things which *must* be contended for. He laments that the 'contentions of Christians have scandalised many',<sup>80</sup> quoting Augustine's mediation in the quarrel between Jerome and Rufinus. Field rules out two areas where scholars do contend, but should not (what *should* be contended for comes later – see below, [3.3]). First [3.1], Christians should not contend in 'things indifferent',<sup>81</sup> where one party insists against another that certain ceremonies, customs and religious observations are necessary. As examples Field cites customs concerning fasting (wherein Field quotes Augustine as holding that this is a 'matter [...] indifferent')<sup>82</sup> and certain customs regarding consecration and baptism rituals.<sup>83</sup> Field's answer is to 'say with the Apostle, We have no such custome, neither the Churches of God'.<sup>84</sup> By 'custome' here, Field means of course customs which may differ, one true church from another, without the difference compromising the orthodoxy of the

<sup>80</sup> *Sermon*, Sig. B4.

<sup>81</sup> *Sermon*, Sig. B5.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>83</sup> *Sermon*, Sig. B5v.

<sup>84</sup> *Sermon*, Sig. B5v, quoting 1 Corinthians 11:16

respective churches. Why is it so inappropriate for Christians to contend in these things? Answer: because such contentions divide true churches from one another.

Secondly, [3.2] Christians should not contend in 'things mistaken',<sup>85</sup> but should strive to resolve such differences by 'friendly mediation'.<sup>86</sup> He refers to issues where two parties, such as the churches of the east and west, find themselves differing in a theological matter, but where the reality is, in Field's opinion, that there is no real difference, only a misunderstanding. Field's prime example is the dispute between east and west, and their mutual misunderstanding, over the persons or hypostases of the godhead. Field writes, 'The Grecians judged the Latines, to be Sabellians, and the Latines the Greekes to be Arrians',<sup>87</sup> into which contention Athanasius 'in gentle and loving manner interposed himselfe, and [...] found they meant one & the same thing'.<sup>88</sup> After Athanasius' intervention it became clear that the Latin church had misunderstood what the eastern church meant by the term 'hypostasis'. The east had understood the term in the same way as the West had used the term 'person'. But the west had 'heard' the east as holding to three different 'substances'. It is only much later, of course, that some wit observed, 'the east and west did not understand one another, because they did not understand one another', meaning of course, 'understand' theologically and 'understand' linguistically, respectively. But it is clear that Field saw the point exactly.

It is the Church of Rome, of course, which anathematised all the eastern churches, leading to the east-west schism of 1054. And it is Field for whom one chief aim is to restore the eastern churches' credibility as being true, non-heretical churches. He wrote as much in the first chapter of his Book 3 in 1606, though briefly – the chapter is less than three pages long. But sometime later, Field began to revise both the Appendix to Book 3 and also two chapters of Book 3 itself – notably chapter 1, which reached over 50 pages in length when this revision was published in 1628. The revised chapter examines the doctrines of all the various churches of the East in minute detail (again, typically for Field), and demonstrates how they are by no means so doctrinally faulty that they can be regarded as heretical – neither any one church singly, nor all of them collectively. His conclusion is: 'Out of all that hath been said, two things are observable. First, [...] all these different sorts of Christians, though distracted and dissevered, [...] mistaking one another, or variety of opinion touching things not fundamental, do yet agree in one substance of the faith, and are so far forth orthodox, that they

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<sup>85</sup> *Sermon*, Sig. B5v.

<sup>86</sup> *Sermon*, Sig. B6v.

<sup>87</sup> *Sermon*, Sig. B6.

<sup>88</sup> *Sermon*, Sig. B6. Field relates how the confusion, as he saw it, hung upon there being two possible translations into Latin of the Greek 'hypostasis', namely 'person' and 'substance'.

retain a saving profession of all divine verities absolutely necessary to salvation, and are all members of the true Catholic Church of Christ'.<sup>89</sup>

Field has made his view eminently clear that 'The object of these sacred writings is *Salvation*'.<sup>90</sup> This is why, Field concludes, 'things indifferent' and 'things mistaken' must never be allowed to divide the church so that churches differing over these things end up out of communion with one another – so long as they hold the common faith.

### 5.8 Field the peacemaker

Of course, it is possible to question Field's argumentation concerning the seriousness of certain doctrinal differences. But what is certain is that Field himself thought that he could rescue, and was rescuing, on his analysis, the eastern churches from the Church of Rome's strictures. For Field, with the sole exception of the Church of Rome, all other world churches were sufficiently in agreement with one another doctrinally, and their (admittedly widely) different ceremonies were sufficiently matters of indifference, or matters of disagreement sufficiently in the category of 'mistaking one another', that it must be concluded that the East and the protestant West constitute one true church together.

This leads us to a very important matter in the study of Field. He is renowned as being, at heart, a peacemaker. His son Nathaniel writes of this several times: 'he did not make use of his Parts for the increasing of Controversies, but rather for the Composing of them',<sup>91</sup> and '[h]e was one which laboured to heale the Breaches of Christendom',<sup>92</sup> and '[h]is Desires, his Praiers, his Endeavours were for Peace, to make up the breaches of the Church, not to widen Differences but to compose them',<sup>93</sup> and 'he did not thinke fit to be too positive in defining any thing, to turne Matters of Opinion into Matters of Faith'.<sup>94</sup> This latter quotation is in regard to the issue of the 'Arminian Points' – i.e. 'those high points of Praedestination and Reprobation, which have so much troubled the Church of late Yeares [...] about which [...] the *Lutherans* and *Calvinists* are so much divided'.<sup>95</sup> Russell Dawn has shown recently that this claim of Nathaniel for the peace-loving nature of his father is certainly true in respect of his eucharistic theology. In his paper 'The Eucharistic Theology of Richard Field') he

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<sup>89</sup> (3.1/i.151)

<sup>90</sup> *Sermon*, Sig. B1.

<sup>91</sup> *Memorials*, 21. A fuller quotation reads: 'His Memorie was great, but his Judgement was greater, he was able to penetrate into the most subtle and intricate Disputes, and yet he did not make use of his Parts for the increasing of Controversies, but rather for the Composing of them'.

<sup>92</sup> *Memorials*, 22.

<sup>93</sup> *Memorials*, 23.

<sup>94</sup> *Memorials*, 22.

<sup>95</sup> *Memorials*, 21.

amply argues 'that Field actually clarified his beliefs through his attempts to reconcile differing protestant camps, and that he espoused not so much a wholly Reformed eucharistic doctrine as a creative synthesis of Lutheran and English Reformed elements, somewhat in tension but not necessarily in contradiction'.<sup>96</sup> In his thesis, Dawn equally shows the same in regard to Field's understanding of predestination – another issue dividing the protestant church, in respect of the Reformed and Arminian factions.<sup>97</sup> Further, it is recorded as mentioned above that King James had intended to send Field to Germany to make peace between the *Lutherans* and the *Calvinists*.<sup>98</sup>

Alan Cromartie also notes Field's sermon: 'Richard Field delivered a remarkable court sermon in which he minimised the relevance of purely speculative disagreements "touching the ubiquitarie presence of Christ, and his presence in the Sacrament, touching the losing, or not losing, of grace once had, and touching predestination; in all which, I am verilie persuaded, if the meaning of each part were fully knowne to [the] other, there would be no difference amongst them"'.<sup>99</sup> Cromartie rightly observes these doctrinal disagreements as being 'all of them, incidentally, points at issue between the Lutherans and the Reformed'.<sup>100</sup> I would question Cromartie's adjacent statement, however, that 'Field was indifferent to such doctrinal details';<sup>101</sup> surely not – the would-be peace-making reconciler cannot be deemed to be indifferent, given his labours to heal the breach. Cromartie does not seem to realise that Field is committed to resolving the disputes, rather than sweeping them under the carpet, however much he sees the sermon, correctly in my view, as 'remarkable'.

If by 'Lutheran' in Nathaniel Field's statement above, about the intention to send Field to Germany, is meant 'Arminian' (a distinct possibility, given that the two terms were sometimes used interchangeably), in the sense discussed above, then it is just possible that this refers to an early desire on the part of James that the English be represented at forthcoming negotiations on the continent regarding the quinquarticular controversy. In the end Field died before the Synod of Dort was actually held, but it is entirely conceivable that, had he lived, Field would have been amongst the English delegation.

<sup>96</sup> Russell Dawn, 'The Eucharistic Theology of Richard Field (1561-1616): Confusion, Contradiction, or Creative Synthesis?' in *Reformation and Renaissance Review: Journal of the Society for Reformation Studies* (London: Equinox Publishing, 2006), 8.2 (2006), 147.

<sup>97</sup> See Russell Dawn, *Predestination and the Lord's Supper in the Polemical Ecclesiology of Richard Field (1561-1616)* (Doctoral thesis, Oxford University, 2011).

<sup>98</sup> *Memorials*, 15.

<sup>99</sup> Alan Cromartie, 'King James and the Hampton Court Conference', in *James VI and I, Ideas, Authority and Government*, ed. by Ralph Houlbrooke (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), 79, quoting *Sermon*, Sig. B6v.

<sup>100</sup> Cromartie, 80.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*



In any event, we know from Field's own pen, and not only from his son Nathaniel's, that he would prefer 'friendly mediation'<sup>102</sup> (by which Augustine had resolved the 'hypostases' controversy) to resolve differences not material to salvation, rather than the use of 'disputing, which often rather increase contentions, then end them'.<sup>103</sup> In regard to the various controversies in Europe – concerning the 'ubiquitarie presence of Christ' (especially in the Eucharist), and also concerning the issue of the 'losing of grace once had', and again, 'touching predestination' – Field avers, 'in all which I am verily perswaded, if the meaning of each part were fully knowne to other, there would be no difference among them'.<sup>104</sup> This, of course, is a radical opinion, and it would be the object of useful research to examine further its plausibility beyond what Dawn has already done – though this is beyond the remit of this study. What we note as relevant here is that Field's 'composing of the differences' within the protestant camp serves his principal purpose of vehemently opposing the Church of Rome. This is what we come to in the next chapters on Field's ecclesiology.

So, notwithstanding Nathaniel Field's opinion in regard to his father's tendency to minimise differences within protestantism, we should question whether Field was perhaps trying excessively hard in his endeavour to assert the essential unity of all the world churches with the sole exception of the Church of Rome. Might Field's trenchant resolve to demonise Rome (and Rome alone) have blinded him to important differences of sufficient seriousness that they could not be so easily dismissed by speaking of churches 'mistaking one another', or as otherwise minor – and that the breaches between the churches thus differing could not be so easily 'composed'? This would be a major subject for analysis and deserves a doctoral study of its own – but it cannot detain us to that needful degree in this study. It goes without saying that subsequent history to this day, in respect of all these issues of 'difference', shows that it is far from easy to 'compose' them.

Given Field's polemicism against Rome – which is abundantly evident in the *Sermon* and even more so in *Of the Church* – one might question Nathaniel Field's insistence on Field's having written to 'make up the Breaches of the Church, not to widen Differences but to compose them'.<sup>105</sup> But we must remember that for Field and the protestants of his time, Rome was no church – not since the Council of Trent when the Church of Rome formularised as essential doctrine the errors and abuses of the preceding centuries. Before Trent, Rome was the true church in the west, albeit fallen into disarray, grievous error, multiple abuses, and the like. Despite its many faults, these were held only by the 'prevailing faction' within Rome, namely the 'pope and his flatterers' – as we shall see in the following chapters. Meanwhile, as we shall also see, all the essential protestant doctrines of the

<sup>102</sup> *Sermon*, Sig. B6v.

<sup>103</sup> *Sermon*, Sig. B6v. NB, 'then' here in this context, and in this era, = 'than' today.

<sup>104</sup> *Sermon*, Sig. B6v.

<sup>105</sup> *Memorials*, 23.

Christian faith were indeed held constantly by some at least, albeit in obscurity. So when Nathaniel Field insists that his father was a conciliator at heart, he intends that to be understood as pertaining within the true protestant church of the west. Hence Field's desire to show how Lutheran and Reformed theology can be reconciled if only the various parties were truly to understand one another.

### 5.9 Field the man of faith

But to return to the *Sermon*, and Field's assessment [3.3] of that which we *must* contend for, 'to wit, matters of fayth, no part whereof we must betray, how deere so ever the defence of it cost us'.<sup>106</sup> Field has already spoken of how the apostolic scriptures amount to, or at least define, the Christian 'faith': they are the 'rule of faith', as noted above. Field is at pains to distinguish between two meanings of the word 'faith'. He observes first its *subjective* use to denote the 'act or habite of beleeving',<sup>107</sup> but he is clear that this is not its use at the end of Jude 3. Rather 'faith' here has its second, *objective* meaning, namely 'that sum of Christian doctrine, the conclusions whereof are not demonstrable by reason'.<sup>108</sup> The word 'reason' here does not simply mean 'intellect', which we note because we cannot accuse Field of believing that a total or even partial surrendering of the intellect is necessary for Christian belief. Field's words 'by reason' mean 'independent of divine revelation' in line with common usage at the time. 'Reason' here is an Aristotelian category, denoting the philosophical belief that the creator instilled within the human mind a capacity to discern of its own accord divine mysteries. This is why Field is so adamant that Christianity is a matter of faith – that is, acceptance of divine revelation – and not independent reason. And so he proceeds, 'Christian doctrine [...] must be believed by faith'.<sup>109</sup> Christian doctrine is not discerned by internal 'reasoning'; rather, it is 'delivered', i.e. by external revelation. Or to put it another way, employing both meanings of 'faith', we might summarise Field thus: 'the *objective* Christian faith is believed by *subjective* Christian faith'. And belief is simply the acceptance of and commitment to the divine revelation. The word 'faith' at the end of Jude 3 (the 'faith' which was 'once delivered') has its objective meaning, but Field is clear that the final words of Jude 3, 'unto the Saints', are crucial as the saints, or believers ('orthodoxe and right beleeving Christians'),<sup>110</sup> comprise the church – which is the depository of the Christian faith, where the gospel is to be found, preserved and defended.

<sup>106</sup> *Sermon*, Sig. B7.

<sup>107</sup> *Sermon*, Sig. B8v.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>109</sup> *Sermon*, Sig. B8v-C1.

<sup>110</sup> *Sermon*, Sig. B7v.

Although Field insists, with Jude, that [3.3.1] Christian people '*should earnestly contend for the maintenance of the Faith*', he laments constant failure so to do. 'Indifferencie in matters of fayth and religion displeaseth God',<sup>111</sup> he writes, but tragically 'the Orthodoxe and right beleieving Christians are negligent'.<sup>112</sup> And so Field stresses Jude's own urgency: 'it was necessarie for me [...] to exhort you, that you should earnestly contend'. Do we have here a prime motive for Field preaching this sermon on this text? I consider this likely, given the stridency of Field's polemic against Rome, here and throughout his *Of the Church*. In several paragraphs Field laments not only the negligence of his own side, the protestants, but the industry of the heretics down through the ages to the Romanists of his own day. For example, he likens the Jesuits and others of his day to the Pharisees of Matthew 23:15<sup>113</sup> who 'omit no opportunitie, take all occasions, & compasse sea & land, to make one Proselyte [...]'.<sup>114</sup> Clearly, given several paragraphs citing examples through history of the paucity of the orthodox contending against the heretics, it is a grief to Field that right believing Christians 'lose the advantages they have'.<sup>115</sup> Thuswise Field shows that 'contend' receives an adverb from Jude: 'earnestly contend'.

### 5.10 The faith once delivered

Finally, then, [3.3.2] Field devotes several more pages to expounding his belief in the necessity of contending for the maintenance of the faith, and he further splits the very final words into [3.3.2.1] '*once delivered*', and [3.3.2.2] '*to the saints*'. In respect of the first [3.3.2.1], the important issue is the finality of the divine revelation of the gospel through the apostles – for 'in the last times God spake by his owne sonne, and by him at once delivered all that, that shal be knowne concerning himselfe, till the ends of the world',<sup>116</sup> so 'Christians must believe nothing but that which was delivered at the first beginning of Christianitie'.<sup>117</sup> To this end he shows the error of Montanism and other like heresy that holds to further 'spiritual' revelation after the apostles.

Field's argumentation is very tight here. It is very important for his demolition of Romanism for, as we have shown earlier in this chapter, anything post-dating the apostles purporting to be authoritative can only be either the private fancy of individuals ('phanaticall and vaine men')<sup>118</sup> such

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<sup>111</sup> *Sermon*, Sig. B7.

<sup>112</sup> *Sermon*, Sig. B7v.

<sup>113</sup> 'Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves' (Matthew 23:15, KJV).

<sup>114</sup> *Sermon*, Sig. B7-B7v.

<sup>115</sup> *Sermon*, Sig. B7v.

<sup>116</sup> *Sermon*, Sig. C1.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*

as Montanus, or new 'traditions' such as those that have entered the church from post-apostolic times or later – that is, the traditions of Rome which, in Field's view, the Church of Rome holds more dearly than the scriptures (as we have shown earlier). '[T]hat onelie [only] is true which was delivered at the first',<sup>119</sup> Field concludes. Furthermore, the apostolic revelation 'is undoubtedly true, as being immediatly inspired from the spirit of truth',<sup>120</sup> which observation cannot be made of later traditions.

In an ensuing chapter, when we come to Field's analysis of the notes of the church, we shall see that Field opposes the Church of Rome in its contention that it satisfies the note of 'antiquity' and that the protestant churches, being novel, have no antiquity. We shall see that he reverses the verdict by arguing that Rome has no antiquity as its valued, essential traditions are post-apostolic, whereas the protestant churches certainly have the note of antiquity – because their foundation is upon the apostles and their writings, which are 'most auncient',<sup>121</sup> and because 'that is the truest and purest Church, which holdeth that doctrine, and discipline that was first delivered'.<sup>122</sup> It is exactly this argument that Field rehearses here in the *Sermon* two years before publishing *Of the Church*. So here we have a prime example of how Field on the one hand proclaims and upholds protestant doctrine – in this case the doctrine of scripture – and on the other hand opposes the doctrine of Rome. Field spends several paragraphs giving a multiplicity of examples of how Rome's traditions and errors are late – and how sometimes their origins are uncertain – and he finally observes with his characteristic invective that, 'we see how weakly the Romanistes prove the antiquitie of their faith and religion, whereof they so insolently glory and boast'.<sup>123</sup>

### 5.11 To the saints

The very last matter [3.3.2.2] Field attends to concerns the phrase '*to the Saints*' at the end of Jude 3. the 'saints' are precisely the company of orthodox Christian believers, because 'they are called to sanctification'.<sup>124</sup> Field's purpose here is to insist that it is in the true church that one finds the true faith.<sup>125</sup> Where the true apostolic church is, there is the true faith, and *vice versa*. Field might be

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<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>120</sup> *Sermon*, Sig. C2.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>122</sup> *Sermon*, Sig. C2-C2v.

<sup>123</sup> *Sermon*, Sig. C4v.

<sup>124</sup> *Sermon*, Sig. C5. 'Saint' and 'sanctification' are from the same Latin root.

<sup>125</sup> 'The second circumstance, whereby the doctrine of faith, for which we must contend is noted and described, unto us least we should mistake it, is that as it was once delivered, so it was delivered to the Saints. So that if we desire to finde the undoubted truth of Heavenly doctrine we must seeke it, not in the confusions of pagan Infidels, not among out cast and forsaken Heretiques, not in the conventicles of Schismatiques, [...] but amongst those Disciples of Christ Jesus, which cannot be justly challenged either for innovation, or division' (*Sermon*, Sig. C4v).

open to a charge of circular reasoning here, of course. But it must be remembered that Field's methodology is to oppose Rome's own claims – in this case, the claim to antiquity. Both parties hold that the true church is the one that satisfies the note of antiquity. But Field argues that Rome's traditions are not of antiquity; therefore its doctrine is not authentic. That is Field's 'knock-down' argument.

Field, of course, as a committed protestant, is absolutely convinced of the truth of the gospel of grace as 'delivered to the saints'. Field has argued equally clearly that this gospel, the Christian faith (objective meaning) is to be believed (subjective meaning) by 'faith'. Rome would not dispute this principle. What they dispute is the protestant conception of the gospel; Field in turn disputes the validity of Rome's charge against protestantism. We 'seeke our Saviour Christ in the troupes [...] of Christian people and pastors, which are named Saints [...] because they are called to sanctification, & have the happie meanes of it. In these companies we shalbe sure to finde our Saviour Christ and the doctrine of faith he left unto us'.<sup>126</sup> But Field does not actually end this last sentence there. He proceeds to insist that the final 'us' in this quotation means those 'uppon whom no note of innovation or division may justly be fastened',<sup>127</sup> or, to conclude, the protestant church.

### 5.12 Field – man of politics or man of faith?

On 15 March 1604, the king has arrived at Whitehall Palace after his progress through London, and Field has been chosen (we know not why he, although we could guess it is on account of his reputation as a court preacher) to preach before the king the following day, which in turn is three days before James' first parliament commences. Moreover, it is just two months after the Hampton Court conference, at which Field was present. But does this 'historical occasion' lend 'political significance' to Field's sermon? I shall argue here that it does not do so to any appreciable extent, save only that, of course, any sermon before the king was *de facto* a political occasion in some general sense. Field was a regular court preacher, but this one recorded sermon we have from Field shows scant evidence of being explicitly political, I believe.

There is no actual evidence beyond the merely circumstantial evidence of his being a royal chaplain that Field was or became a 'political figure'; and no evidence at all that political opinions in any special way influenced his writings, or his sermon (in my opinion) – unless every religious matter and controversy of the day should be considered to be within the realm of politics; but in that case every protestant sermon in the land would be a political sermon, and I suggest this would devalue both the

<sup>126</sup> *Sermon*, Sig. C5.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid*, Sig. C5.

words 'political' and 'sermon'. Attending court for one month a year, as royal chaplain, of course entailed Field associating with political figures, and it could be that King James and Field sometimes discussed politics as well as divinity. But nonetheless there is no record from these associations of Field's political opinions.

Likewise, it is known that Field associated with political figures outside of court. For example, we know of Field's friendship with Sir Henry Neville and Sir Henry Savile. Neville had been Elizabeth's one-time ambassador to France. Savile was Master of Eton and later a Bible translator. Both had been implicated in the Essex rebellion of 1601, and arrested – Neville being imprisoned in the Tower until King James released him upon his accession. Both were rehabilitated, and although Neville in particular was involved in trying to reconcile the king and parliament (somewhat unsuccessfully), neither were considered rebels against authority in James' time. Both lived near Windsor, and both became Field's friends. Nathaniel Field quotes a daughter of Neville as having testified to her father's appreciation of Field's company, saying he 'rejoiced in no Mans Companie more then in his'.<sup>128</sup> Of course, both were political figures, and of course the friends may well have talked politics here and there (though such is not anywhere recorded in our relevant texts). It is simply their mutually valued friendship that we know of.

It must of course be conceded that Field had a firm belief in the concept of the Christian prince to whom was assigned his temporal authority in ordering the affairs of the church. This is entirely typical of the time, especially amongst conformist divines such as Field, and is not in contention. This doctrine of the tight connection between Christian church and Christian state is certainly discernible, of course, in Field's *Of the Church*, but Field does not labour this point, certainly not in the sermon. Where Field, in his *Of the Church*, insists on the right of the temporal ruler, the Christian king, to govern the church (in so far as it is a state church), it is not usually an end in itself, but rather serves either to demonstrate that the pope has no power to depose princes – which is an important point in Field's polemic – or to demonstrate a generalised view of leadership as a stepping stone to developing his more specific notion of the appropriate government of God's church by its ministers.

Of course Field would have held the king to have a double power, spiritual and temporal, exactly as all other compliant churchmen of his time. However, although the monarch has absolute temporal power in the realm, his spiritual power is that of the laity, albeit he is the chief amongst the laity – for in Field's view the king is laity despite being supreme governor of the church. Being supreme governor does not give the monarch spiritual power, for that belongs to the bishops and their fellow presbyters. The king has absolute power to regulate the affairs of the church, but may not preach a

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<sup>128</sup> *Memorials*, 12.

sermon or administer the sacraments. For all that James insisted on the principle of the divine right of kings, he is a layman. And we must remember too that it is James himself who is recorded (by William Barlow) as having coined the phrase, 'no bishop, no king'; only a bishop may convey to the king the divine authority to rule. But does Field specifically preach the supreme governorship of the king here in this sermon?

### 5.13 The sermon's third paragraph

[1.1] Many and great are the things Almightye God requireth of them, whom he appointeth Rulers and Governours over his people. For as he communicateth unto them part of his owne honour, giveth them his owne tytles, setteth them upon his owne seate, committeth the care of his people unto them, and trusteth them with the execution of his owne justice and judgement, so he requireth of them, and putteth in them a spirit of more, then ordinary wisdom, courage, and magnanimitie, fit to sustaine and beare the weight of so great a burthen. But above all he requireth of them a tender and loving affection towards his people, of whom they take the charge, that they seeke not their owne private pleasure, profit, or content, but the good of them over whom they are set.<sup>129</sup>

The third paragraph of the sermon, following a brief introduction, introduces the first of Field's three main points – the duty of love. It commences, '[1.1] Many and great are the things Almightye God requireth of them, whom he appointeth Rulers and Governours over his people', and shows how any ruler has a delegated responsibility, given by God, to rule well. Several points must be made.

First, we must assume by the 'governours over his people' Field includes, or specifically means, the king of England – although even this is not absolutely certain, because for Field all rule is God-given, whether it is the rule of a monarch or emperor, or the rule of the magistrate in society, or the rule of the head of a family, or the rule of the clergy over their congregations. Everything in this third paragraph can equally be held to apply to any of those leadership functions; Field here extols the virtue of loving care in a number of different ways. The king is governor, in the sense of being 'supreme governor'; but equally, in a different sense, the clergy also have the responsibility to rule the people (spiritually). In fact, leaving aside context, this paragraph works perfectly well if it simply refers to the clergy and their spiritual responsibility. In fact, I think it does not, because the next much longer, fourth paragraph specifically concerns the clergy. So I conclude that the shorter paragraph is meant to be heard by the king, and enjoins loving rule on him as on all Field's auditors. But it is only one third of the length of the next one.

Secondly, as I have argued above, the third paragraph of the sermon, point [1.1], concerns a *general* theme, albeit applicable (but not actually specifically applied) to the king, by way of introduction to

<sup>129</sup> *Sermon*, Sig. A3v-A4.

the more *specific*. I have shown that this is a device typical for Field. Where he is aiming in section [1] is the responsibility of the clergy to love the people in their charge. He reaches this aim in the fourth paragraph [1.2], which is much longer than the third [1.1], commencing, 'And as this is required generally of all Rulers, so most principally of them, to whom the Word of reconciliation, the dispensation of the Divine mysteries, and the power of the keyes of the kingdome of heaven is committed'.<sup>130</sup> This does not mean [1.1] is unimportant; but it does mean that it is not the goal of his argument. That Field is moving from the general to the particular is not simply my own observation; Field himself says so explicitly, 'as [...] generally [...], so most principally'. So the third paragraph, about the *general* rule, is transitory, leading towards the greater *particular* concern – namely, an appeal that the ministers of God's people should love their people following [1.3] the examples of Christ, Moses and Paul – just as in exactly the same way points [2.1.1] through to [2.3.2.1] drive towards the final seminal point in that section [2.3.2.2], concerning the scriptures, as I have shown above.

The sermon is a homily, because Jude 3 is a homily, with its keynote 'exhort'. Thus it is certainly true that King James, hearing the sermon, will consider himself exhorted to play his part in contending for the protestant faith; and as king his part would be considerable. And he would need little encouragement, for we know that he, together with all the protestant divines of his day, was adamant that the Romanist faith needed to be opposed resolutely, and he was no mean theologian himself. But the entire exhortatory intent of this homily is directed at all the audience, especially the clergy and bishops who were undoubtedly present.

Thirdly, only once subsequently in this very long sermon does Field refer specifically to the responsibility of the monarch, when he expresses a hope 'that by the goodness of God, and the godly care of our gracious Sovereigne, they [the past dissensions within the Church of England] are now at an end'.<sup>131</sup> His hope is never realised, of course (even to this day). But Field is here clearly addressing the king. It is a sermon before the king, after all, and it is hardly surprising that Field specifically includes him at one point (although if Field is referring to the mending of previous divisions, he must surely be referring to the reign of Elizabeth more than of James – though he may have the Hampton Court conference in mind as well). Field certainly acknowledges the responsibility of the ruler of any Christian state to regulate the practices of the church for the church's good. For example, Field acknowledges with approval the role of the emperors of old in calling the general councils. And a final observation is that if Field were particularly seeking to encourage and exhort the king, whom we know loved being flattered, then he had ample opportunity to do so in a multitude of very specific

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<sup>130</sup> *Sermon*, Sig. A4.

<sup>131</sup> *Sermon*, Sig. B6v.



ways. But he does not. A single specific reference to the king does not make this a political sermon, nor Field a specifically political person. We need, rather, to find the 'heartbeat' of this sermon elsewhere. I have shown above that the predominant audience of the sermon is the clergy, and its predominant concern is to uphold the gospel of grace as delivered in the apostolic scriptures.

### 5.14 Politics in the pulpit?

One other modern scholar, Margaret Jones-Davies, has written, at some length, upon Field's sermon. Her essay is 'Dr. Richard Field and King James I: Politics in the Pulpit'.<sup>132</sup> Jones-Davies's view of the sermon differs from mine, in that she does find 'politics' in the 'pulpit' that day, hence the title. But I cannot see that she has demonstrated her point. For example, she avers that 'the historical occasion [...] gives the context for a deeper understanding of the political significance of the text'.<sup>133</sup> And she writes that Field's specific role on this occasion was to stress the spiritual power that the King as *Defensor Fidei* had taken upon himself'.<sup>134</sup> But in these respects we do not find Field capitalising on the situation to make more than a single specific comment and one general paragraph about (or to) the king; he could have expatiated at length if he had wished. If the occasion somehow obligated the preacher to be political, then Field singularly failed to live up to the expectation, as shown above. Of course the occasion required a sermon, but it is more likely that Field was chosen for his renown as a preacher than that he was known as being 'political'. Then also Jones-Davies mentions Field's politician friends, Neville and Savile, and adduces this circumstantial evidence (which is all it is) to ally Field to her political sermon theory – but as argued above, there is no direct evidence of these friends giving Field a name for politics.

She insists, though, that 'Field saw himself not only as an apologist for the Church but also as the spokesman for the new religious politics of the times, based on the hope of putting an end to the wars of religion'.<sup>135</sup> Jones-Davies adduces no evidence that Field saw himself particularly in this way. True, she follows it with a remark about Field's 'propensities as a peace-maker',<sup>136</sup> but as she herself concedes here by noting the king's one-time intention to send Field to 'Germanie for the Composing of the Differences between the *Lutherans* and the *Calvinists*',<sup>137</sup> Field's peacemaking was *within* protestantism, but the polemic of Field's sermon is against Rome. The wars of religion – though

<sup>132</sup> Margaret Jones-Davies, 'Dr. Richard Field and King James I: *Politics in the Pulpit*. A Commentary on A *Learned Sermon*', in *The Struggle for the Succession in Late Elizabethan England: Politics, Polemics and Cultural Representations*, ed. by Jean-Christophe Mayer (Montpellier, France: Université Paul-Valéry Montpellier, 2004). Hereafter, *Politics in the Pulpit*.

<sup>133</sup> *Politics in the Pulpit*, 279.

<sup>134</sup> *Politics in the Pulpit*, 280.

<sup>135</sup> *Politics in the Pulpit*, 278.

<sup>136</sup> *Politics in the Pulpit*, 278.

<sup>137</sup> *Memorials*, 15.

many, and seemingly interminable, and a significant issue before, during and after Field's time – were all between Romanism and protestantism of one stripe or another. All in all, I find myself unpersuaded by Jones-Davies's finding politics in Field's pulpit.

### 5.15 Summary of the chapter

I have concluded that the principal purpose of Field's *Sermon* is to join the Apostle Jude in upholding and defending the Christian faith in its objective sense, and to commend that the Christian church in both their ages should 'contend' for 'the maintenance of the faith'. The *Sermon* is in three main sections, albeit of very unequal length. The first section expounds the principle of 'love' as absolutely necessary amongst the 'rulers and governors over his people'. This section is brief, and stands rather alone, and does not itself drive the argument towards later material. The second section is substantial, expounding the word 'diligence'. Although there is much introductory material and there are many sub-points (all significant), nonetheless the entire section drives towards the final sub-point, which is to uphold the definitive role of the apostolic scriptures. And this itself anticipates and advances the argument on to the final main section, which is to commend the urgency of the task of defending the Christian faith as revealed in those scriptures. Jones-Davies nowhere makes these observations. This final section is by far the longest, and within it Field defends the protestant Christian faith, founded upon the scriptures – which are most ancient and therefore authentic and authoritative in defining belief. But as Field draws his sermon to a close, it is evident that he has not forgotten how he started, with the principle of love. Urging love now, not only for God's people, as he did at the beginning, but also for God's revealed word, Field ends lyrically,

Let us beseech almighty God to enlighten our understandings, that we may know [the faith once delivered unto the saints], to frame our harts to the love of it, and to make us ever constant in the defence of it. Amen.<sup>138</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> *Sermon*, Sig. C6v.

## Chapter 6

### – Field’s Ecclesiology –

#### 6. Abstract of this chapter

The definition, description and delineation of the church was Field’s consuming passion, and his one major work is a systematic ecclesiology; but not as an end in itself. Rather, the aetiology for his writing is what he considers to be the ‘unhappy divisions of the Christian world’, created, he is convinced, principally through the progressive departure of the Church of Rome from the authentic apostolic Christian faith during the preceding ten centuries. In the ‘Second Part’ of this study I shall observe Field reacting to Rome’s rejection of the churches of the East. In the remainder of this ‘First Part’ I examine Field justifying the claim of the Church of England of the Elizabethan Settlement to be a true church, indeed *the* true church in England, against the claims of the Church of Rome that it is no church at all. In this chapter I demonstrate how Field develops his ecclesiology, charting the biblical development of God’s church through time, from creation through to the post-apostolic era. In the two chapters following this, I analyse Field’s ‘notes’ of the church, and assess Field’s justification of the bishops, and thus of the ministry and validity, of the Church of England.

There has not been an extended study of Field’s ecclesiology before now, and there is very little secondary literature to interact with that assesses Field’s ecclesiology as a whole. Inevitably the following chapters will be very largely exploratory and explanatory. In these chapters I engage with Field himself on his terms, but in later chapters I seek to set Field in the context of his contemporaries and predecessors, at least to some extent. In imitation of Field’s own style, though not deliberately so, I give a highly structured account of his ecclesiology.

#### 6.1 – Field’s conception of the Church – its definition, description and delineation

THE consideration of the unhappy divisions of the Christian world, and the infinite distractions of men’s minds, not knowing, in so great variety of opinions, what to think, or to whom to join themselves, (every faction boasting of the pure and sincere profession of heavenly truth, challenging to itself alone the name of the Church, and fastening upon all that dissent, or are

otherwise minded, the hateful note of schism and heresy), hath made me ever think, that there is no part of heavenly knowledge more necessary, than that which concerneth the Church.<sup>1</sup>

So laments Richard Field in the 'Epistle Dedicatory'<sup>2</sup> of his work of 1606 to the then Archbishop of Canterbury, Richard Bancroft. Demonstrating a right understanding of the church was Field's lifetime's work and consuming passion. He goes on to explain how few have troubled to write, or are even capable of writing in his view, on the nature of the church, most preferring instead to engage in doctrinal discussion and dispute, examining theology rather than ecclesiology. One might question Field's claim that 'few' had written on ecclesiology, because there was certainly a flurry of new such writings in James I's reign, in response to a common perception that James was more open to discussion than his predecessor. The cherished ambitions of the millenary petitioners, hoping for a more favourable accommodation of their desired puritan stance than they had been used to previously, and a similar hope amongst the recusants, especially under the archpriesthood of George Birkhead, and especially amongst those recusants who were prepared to swear James' oath of allegiance, that they too might be more tolerated, both indicate the renewed confidence of the early Stuart era. After the determined anti-protestant manoeuvres of Mary Tudor, and after the trauma to Elizabeth of the treason of Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots, the Spanish armada, and the treasons of Essex and others, and in the light of Elizabeth's (and Archbishop Whitgift's) severity towards the presbyterians and especially the separatists, hope under James was rekindled. As it turned out, neither the presbyterians nor the recusants found the accommodation they had hoped for. But there was definitely a surge in ecclesiological writing.

We should not forget the very early definitive contribution of John Jewel in his *Apologia Ecclesiae Anglicanae*<sup>3</sup> of 1562, immediately translated into English by Anne Bacon (a near neighbour to Field in his childhood), and known as Jewel's 'Apology'. But then Field was very much in the vanguard of this. We do not know when he commenced writing his *Of the Church*, but it would not be unreasonable to suppose he wrote his *Epistle Dedicatory* to Archbishop Bancroft sometime between Bancroft's accession in 1604 and the printing of Books 1-4 of *Of the Church* in 1606. Indeed, in this dedication to Bancroft we read not only that Field addresses the archbishop: 'it pleased your Grace so lovingly to accept, and so favourably to approve these my poor pains', but that it had been 'by your direction and appointment I first entered into'<sup>4</sup> them. This may have been before 1604, of course, prior to

<sup>1</sup> (ED/I.xix).

<sup>2</sup> (ED/I.xix-xxiv). Richard Field's *Epistle Dedicatory* of 1606 to Archbishop Bancroft is not to be confused with Nathaniel Field's *Epistle Dedicatory* of 1628 to the Duke of Buckingham on the publication of the second edition of Field's *Of the Church* (all five books). The latter precedes the former, at (I.xvii).

<sup>3</sup> We have examined this in the preceding chapter. John Jewel, *Apologia Ecclesiae Anglicanae* (London: 1562); translated as *An Apologie, or Aunswer in Defence of the Church of England concerninge the state of religion used in the same. Newly set forth in Latin, and nowe translated into Englishe* (London: 1562). Editions in both languages followed many times through to the late 17<sup>th</sup> century, especially in the late-Elizabethan and early Jacobean years.

<sup>4</sup> (ED/I.xxii).

which Bancroft was bishop of London, or, if it really was Bancroft who had commissioned Field to write the work, it could possibly have resulted from the aftermath of the Hampton Court conference. Two years was certainly time enough for Field to complete Books 1-4, including the original appendix to Book 3 (before Field radically enlarged it between 1606 and 1616). Field then very much led the field, though not exclusively, in renewed interest in ecclesiology, and it is ecclesiology rather than doctrine that is Field's principal, even overriding, concern. As argued in chapter 1, Dawn's suggestion that *Of the Church* is 'a book of doctrine' is true but doesn't capture Field's ecclesiological purpose.

Possible explanations for why Field published his Books 1-4 in 1606, not waiting for his completion of Book 5, eventually published in 1610, include that the 1606 publication was only six months after the Gunpowder Plot; and that 1606 was the year of the *Oath of Allegiance* of James I, around which there was immediate controversy, particularly amongst the recusant Romanists. Some felt they were able to make the oath with a reasonably good conscience, even the archpriest George Blackwell, given they felt they could see it as a political oath rather than religious; but others could not (including Blackwell's successor George Birkhead), and accused their fellow religionists of compromise. Thus, capitalising on this circumstance, Jewel's *Apology* was reprinted that year, and Field's Books 1-4 for the first time. But we cannot be sure that this was the precipitating reason.

In the 2,000 pages of Field's writings,<sup>5</sup> therefore, we do not see much discussion of the finer points of doctrine, such as of the exact apostolic doctrine of the cross of Christ, save when such matters bear upon his own principal concern, which is the delineation of God's church. An example, to pick just one, where Field engages at a doctrinal level, but for his own ecclesiological purpose, and it is an example that has contemporary relevance for our own day, is his consideration of women priests. Upon this subject he pronounces a negative verdict, typical of his time, in a chapter describing the ordination of women as the 'heresy of the Peputians'.<sup>6</sup> But this two-page foray into the (supposed) validity of the ordination of women is not as an end in itself, but, as always, for the ulterior purpose of defending the English Church of the Elizabethan settlement. It will repay a brief study as an example of how Field counters the charges of Rome that the English Church is no church at all.

The Romanists misreport Luther, Field argues. Luther has said, in all innocence, that although ordinarily, for the good order of the church, it is an ordained minister who absolves the penitent, in case of necessity, there being no minister to give comfort to the penitent, absolution is not so necessarily the function of the minister that it cannot be done by a layman or even a woman. But because in the theology of the Church of Rome absolution is a sacrament proper only to the

<sup>5</sup> In the 19<sup>th</sup> century EHS edition. 700k words in any edition.

<sup>6</sup> (3.25/1.276).

priesthood, whereby sin is sacramentally taken away, therefore, in Rome's view, the protestants are advocating the ordination of women. But of course Rome cannot use its own theology to criticise the *outworkings* of the radical doctrine of Luther and subsequently the protestants; Rome can criticise the radical doctrine, but cannot complain simply that this point about absolution is inconsistent within Luther's scheme, for it is not. We should note at this point that in Luther's view, after initial struggles in his thinking regarding penance, and in subsequent protestant thought, absolution is not a sacrament, but simply the offering of comfort to the penitent, assuring them of the forgiveness that comes, not from any priestly function, but from the gospel: 'Luther thinketh it to be a comfortable pronouncing, and assuring of good to the humble, penitent, and sorrowful sinner'.<sup>7</sup> This is reflected in the absolution of the protestant Book of Common Prayer, which includes the promise, 'he [that is, in context, God, not the priest] pardoneth and absolveth [...]'. Likewise Field defends the Elizabethan church against the Romanist charge that because Elizabeth is, on their supposition, 'chief bishop within her dominion of England', therefore the Church of England has her at least as a woman priest. But again, the Romanist case hangs on *their* understanding of ministry, not the protestant one. Field is adamant here, as in many other places, that any 'Christian ruler', whatever their responsibility and power over their subjects, is, quite simply, a member of the laity. So to conclude this point, Field denies the Church of England is guilty of the Peputian heresy, but not because he is actually particularly interested in this doctrinal point; rather, because he wishes to give the lie to the accusations of Rome. And this is his constant aim throughout all his writing.

Why, we might ask, is the formulation of an ecclesiology and an apologetic for church unity his specific chosen task, rather than a delineation of Christian truth? This is an intriguing question, given that, as we shall see, apostolic Christian truth is the absolute bedrock of his entire argument (essentially it is the first of his three 'notes' of the church – a subject which will be dealt with later), and the preservation of apostolic doctrine a prominent motive for him. Apart from the ministry and sacraments of the church, which Field holds as essential as apostolic doctrine,<sup>8</sup> nothing is more foundational for his understanding of the church, and Field does in fact devote significant attention to setting out the fundamentals of this 'faith once delivered to the saints'.<sup>9</sup> Nonconformist (or at least presbyterian) tendencies,<sup>10</sup> we must remember, provides the national backdrop to much of the theological debate around the turn of the century, and the publication of Field's first edition of Books 1 to 4 came only two years after the Hampton Court Conference (at which he was present), itself

<sup>7</sup> (3.25/l.277).

<sup>8</sup> See (3.4/l.158) for a typical summary of essential Christian doctrine, for example.

<sup>9</sup> Field frequently refers to this quotation from Jude 3 (e.g. at 1.14/l.44, 2.5/l.81, 3.41/l.330, 3.43/l.349). He preached a sermon on this verse before the king at Whitehall, exactly two months after the Hampton Court Conference in 1604 (on Friday 16 March). This sermon was published in the same year (see chapter 5 of this study).

<sup>10</sup> See, for example, Patrick Collinson, *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement* (Oxford: 1967), for an assessment of early (pre-Hampton Court, 1604) nonconformity.

devoted to debate on the nonconformism/presbyterianism issue. Although it was Hooker, rather than Field, whose work argued specifically against the nonconformists, it remains the case that the unity and stability of the still young Church of England was a very vexed issue. We shall shortly observe that they whom Field principally opposes, the Romanists, had charged the Church of England with having broken unity, both by schism and heresy, and that Field counters the charge with a claim that it is the Church of England, not the papist faction of the Church of Rome, that is in unity with the historic apostolic church. With Rome on the one hand, and the nonconformists on the other, threatening the stability, as Field saw it, of all that the English Reformation had fought for, it must not be wondered that the unity of the church was such a great concern to him. And yet Field's quest for the essential unity of the church is not at the expense of the essential doctrine of the church, for, as we shall see, unity is precisely unity in the truth of the apostolic Christian faith, in his estimation.

With his *magnum opus* thus devoted to this subject, and running to well over 2,000 pages in its nineteenth century edition, Field arguably held an exalted and deeply respectful view of the church, 'that blessed company, which [. . .] we call the Christian Church, as consisting of them that believe in Christ now already come in the flesh'.<sup>11</sup> Field notes that this church has been *elected* and *called* by God, and that it is a work of his *grace*.<sup>12</sup> Using terminology reminiscent of Cyprian ('You cannot have God as Father unless you have the Church as Mother', and 'He who does not hold this unity [. . .] does not hold life and salvation'),<sup>13</sup> and of Calvin ('for those to whom [God] is Father, the Church may also be mother', and 'this mother [should] conceive us in her womb, give us birth, nourish us at her breast, and lastly, unless she keep us under her care and guidance')<sup>14</sup> (Calvin himself clearly following Cyprian), Field writes lyrically of the nature of the church as 'that happy mother, in whose womb we are conceived, with whose milk we are nourished, and to whose censures we must submit'.<sup>15</sup> I quote these in sufficient length for us to observe that Field follows Calvin carefully, save for his final point;

<sup>11</sup> (1.5/1.19). Field here draws on 1 John 4:2.

<sup>12</sup> The church is 'the multitude and number of those whom Almighty God severeth from the rest of the world by the work of his grace, and calleth to the participation of eternal happiness, by the knowledge of such supernatural verities as concerning their everlasting good He hath revealed in Christ His Son, and such other precious and happy means as He hath appointed to further and set forward the work of their salvation. So that it is the work of grace, and the heavenly call, that give being to the Church, and make it a different society from all other companies of men in the world [. . .] whence, for distinction from them, it is named *ecclesia*, a multitude called out' (1.6/1.25).

<sup>13</sup> Cyprian of Carthage: *On the Unity of the Catholic Church*, 251CE (Treatise 1, §6), in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, ed. by A. Roberts, J. Donaldson and A. Cleveland Coxe, 10 vols (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986; or Buffalo: The Christian Literature Company, 1886), v, 423.

<sup>14</sup> Compare Calvin, e.g., '[. . .] the Church, into whose bosom God is pleased to gather his sons, not only that they may be nourished by her help and ministry as long as they are infants and children, but also that they may be guided by her motherly care until they mature and at last reach the goal of faith. [. . .] for those to whom [God] is Father, the Church may also be mother' (*Institutes*, 4.1.1, Battle's translation), and 'For there is no other way to enter into life unless this mother conceive us in her womb, give us birth, nourish us at her breast, and lastly, unless she keep us under her care and guidance' (*Institutes*, 4.1.4).

<sup>15</sup> 'We say, therefore, that all they are of the Church, that outwardly hold the faith of Christ; and that that society wherein the sincere outward profession of the truth of God is preserved, is that true Church of God, whose communion we must embrace; that happy mother, in whose womb we are conceived, with whose milk we are nourished, and to whose censures we must submit' (1.11/1.38).

which for Calvin, was motherly *care* and for Field was motherly *discipline*. We may note this as surprising, given that it is usually the presbyterian model that is noted for emphasis on discipline.

Field's motivation in writing may be narrowed further than his just presenting an exalted view of the church. Unlike Richard Hooker, who was principally concerned in engaging with nonconformism, Field's target was Romanism, or papism, as he variously described it. There are one or two instances where Field touches upon the debate with nonconformism, but they are very few and slight. There is ample evidence that Field did feel very strongly about (and against) nonconformism, and that he was influential in Oxford to that end. But this is not his principal concern in writing *Of the Church*. His concerns are at the opposite pole. His desire is to legitimise the post-Reformation Church in England not only as *a* legitimate church, but as *the*, and *the only*, legitimate church in England, against the protestations of his Romanist opponents who charged that the Church of England is no church at all. Field is aware of the standard question with which his Romanist opponents had taunted English protestantism, namely, "Where was your church before Luther?".<sup>16</sup> He does not himself respond with the common counter question, "Where was your face before you washed it?" (although Field is well capable of sarcasm himself, as I have already noted in my Introduction). Rather, his answer was the common rejoinder that the true<sup>17</sup> church before Luther was to be found in (amongst 'all the Churches in the world')<sup>18</sup> the Roman church (excluding, in Field's view, its heretical but prevailing 'papist' faction, the perpetrator of Rome's 'damnable errors').<sup>19</sup>

A particularly intriguing and potentially effective aspect of Field's thesis finds him not only affirming that the true church before Luther was to be found within (but not coterminous with) the Roman church, but also asserting (and, in his own estimation, proving) that every key protestant doctrine was held by at least some in the Church of Rome constantly throughout the ages, *and* in all the churches of the East also – a point Field emphasises several times; and that every heresy which he considers to be now held by the papist faction is (relatively) novel and not apostolic. Field's argument with Rome is not with the Roman church *per se*, but with the papist faction within it, a heretical

<sup>16</sup> This question was commonly asked of protestants by Roman Catholics. Field refers to it a number of times, e.g., 'It is therefore most fond and frivolous, that some demand of us where our Church was before Luther began?', (3.6/i.165).

<sup>17</sup> Exactly what value is given to the word 'true', qualifying the word 'church', used much by Field, will be remarked upon further in due course. For the present, we may observe that it means, naturally, a true church as opposed to a false one, the latter being a pretended church that actually does not satisfy various requirements for it to be called a church. These also will be examined later.

<sup>18</sup> (3.8/i.171).

<sup>19</sup> (3.8/i.171). '[W]e most firmly believe, all the Churches in the world, wherein our fathers lived and died, to have been the true Church of God, in which undoubtedly salvation was to be found; and that they which taught, embraced, and believed those damnable errors which the Romanists now defend against us, were a faction only in the Churches' (3.8/i.171).



faction in his estimation, albeit for centuries the prevailing faction. We turn, then, to an analysis of Field's conception of the church.

### 6.1.1 – The Definition of the Church

Field defines the church in various ways, according to 'the different sorts of them that do pertain unto it'.<sup>20</sup> Field did not hold a fixed view of the church, neither making it to be coterminous with the body of the elect as did Rome, nor making it clearly, visibly and unequivocally demarcatable in its composition. He is neither unique, nor the first to do so, of course. The concept of the difference between the church visible and the church invisible has a pedigree going back at least to Augustine. Augustine developed his theory of the church with the Donatist controversy very much in mind, and it reached its fully developed state with the completion in 426 CE of his *The City of God*. Essentially his view is that there are two conceptions of the church: first, the invisible body of God's elect, comprising all true believers from all ages and throughout the world, including those alive at any one time (the heavenly 'city'), and secondly the church as an earth-bound ecclesiastical institution (the earthly 'city'), the body of professing believers gathered for worship and guidance under the ministry of priests and bishops (who were the appointed successors to the apostles). This second understanding of the church includes both true believers (the elect) and apparent, but not true, believers – the wheat and the tares as Augustine explained it. It is thus apparent that Augustine's view forms the basis of the view of the Reformers in general, and, as we shall see, Field in particular. Martin Luther at the forefront of the Reformation echoed this Augustinian view of the church.<sup>21</sup>

In line with the positions of Augustine and Luther, and also of Calvin and Hooker (see below) and many others, Field widens his definition of the church so as to include those who 'pertain unto it'<sup>22</sup> in a less clearly definable sense than Rome<sup>23</sup> did, and he held that only to God himself was the company of the elect, the 'invisible church', clearly known. Field develops his understanding of the church in two ways: first, he shows how the church developed in time, beginning with God's creation, and progressing through the fall, the Patriarchs, through to Jesus Christ and the apostles and following; secondly he develops different 'acceptations'<sup>24</sup> of the church according to whether

<sup>20</sup> (1.title/i.xxv).

<sup>21</sup> Martin Luther: 'For my own part I am most heartily persuaded that nothing corporeal can represent the invisible or spiritual Church of the Redeemer; and that its true nature can be discerned only by faith and not sight', *On Councils and Churches*, 1539, tr. C. B. Smyth (London: 1847), part III.

<sup>22</sup> (1.6/i.25).

<sup>23</sup> In Tridentine Rome's view, the church is the company of all those who belong to the Church of Rome by baptism, and not subsequently excommunicated from it, or otherwise guilty of mortal sin. Necessarily, on this view, the church is coterminous with 'the elect'.

<sup>24</sup> This word, sometimes spelt 'accepions', is Field's. An 'acceptation' of the church is a way of considering the delineation of the church, depending on how inclusive or exclusive he wishes to be at any point. He also uses the concept of the two 'moieties' of the church, to denote the Old Testament church before Christ, and the New Testament church from

heretics, or schismatics, etc., are to be included or not – he is content to consider the church to include or exclude these as appropriate to the immediate context, but is careful to make clear, in context, just which accept(at)ion of the church is in his mind at any one time. We shall observe Field's development of the church in time first, and then secondly according to the various degrees of inclusiveness.<sup>25</sup> The development of the Reformation concept of the church is dealt with briefly below, including Calvin's innovation, he himself following Augustine, followed in turn by the Church of England 'Articles of Religion', then by Hooker and Field, of the distinction between the visible and the invisible church.

## 6.2 – The Development of the Church in Time

### 6.2.1 – The Church in the Beginning

God has always had a church, according to Field (and he is content to use the term 'church', typically defined as in the next quotation below, to denominate the people of God at whatever stage of the history of the created world he is considering), ever since creation itself, even pre-fall.<sup>26</sup>

This glorious society of men and angels, whom the Most High God, passing by all his other creatures made capable of felicity and bliss, calling them to the view, sight, and enjoying of Himself, is rightly named [...] the Church of the living God, the joyful company of them among whom His greatness is known, and His name called upon, the multitude which, by the sweet motions of His divine grace, He hath called out to the participation of eternal happiness.<sup>27</sup>

Field certainly understands the church of the elect in the classic Pauline/Augustinian conception of the elect whom God chose before the foundation of the world, and who would ultimately be God's people in all eternity, 'that happy society of blessed ones',<sup>28</sup> definitively delineated in God's mind, but a notional concept and not definitively known in the imperfect mind of mankind. But that notwithstanding, Field is insistent that the notional church of the elect, has had a real, historical manifestation in the world at all times since creation – the 'visible' church, not coterminous with the elect. We shall examine this distinction, and thus the distinction between the church visible and the church invisible, later. It should be observed that this church of the elect had an existence in the created prelapsarian world, though only minimally and briefly in the persons of Adam and Eve pre-

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Christ onwards. However, it must be stressed that the two moieties are the two parts of the same whole, for God has only ever had one single church, continuous all the way from Adam, in Field's ecclesiology.

<sup>25</sup> The development of the Reformation concept of the church is dealt with briefly below, including Calvin's innovation, he himself following Augustine, followed in turn by the Church of England 'Articles of Religion', then by Hooker and Field, of the distinction between the visible and the invisible church. See, e.g., Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition: a history of the development of doctrine* (Chicago, 1983), iv, for a more comprehensive overview.

<sup>26</sup> This, perhaps at first sight rather odd, idea will be explained shortly.

<sup>27</sup> (1.1/1.7).

<sup>28</sup> (1.3/1.14).

fall (more on this in due course). Interestingly, Field realised that the fall of mankind had immediate implications for the continued existence of the church, and uses that to suggest that Adam must have repented and been restored soon after;<sup>29</sup> referring here not to canonical protestant Scripture, but to the OT apocrypha at Wisdom 10:1.<sup>30</sup> Field here preserves the notion, common to his era, of the indefectibility of the church.

In Field's estimation any creature, being thus not God himself, is not self-existent, self-contained or autonomous, nor is he perfect.<sup>31</sup> In contrast God himself 'is infinite, and hath no limit to his perfection, [. . .] and is from everlasting to everlasting'.<sup>32</sup> But imperfect things have a predisposition to return to the perfection of their origin, a distinctively Platonic notion.<sup>33</sup>

It must be observed at this point that Field defers to the realm of late-medieval philosophy, entirely characteristic for his time (as also in previous eras) in the early modern world of academic theology, particularly noting his considerable knowledge of theological writers from all ages, hence his needing to support views such as this either from medieval scholastic theologians (which he does frequently), or with a quotation (for example – see previously) from the Wisdom of Solomon. A study of Field's dependence upon Greek philosophy, particularly of Plato and Aristotle, and his dependence upon the church Fathers and schoolmen in so far as they themselves were significantly influenced by Greek philosophy, is beyond the remit of this paper, but would be an interesting and valuable exercise. In Field's case his philosophical outlook is more Augustinian than Aristotelian, although he was of course schooled at Oxford in the propositional logic and classification systems of Aristotelian thought – and, judging by his reputation, an expert exponent.

In the case of the (non-human) animal world this 'inclination of desire' to 'fly back' towards the 'divine perfections' is strictly limited to their own self-awareness, such as it may be.<sup>34</sup> A higher

<sup>29</sup> 'Adam, the father of all the living, repent[ed] after his fall and return[ed] to God. For we must not think, that God was without a Church among men at any time' (1.4/i.16).

<sup>30</sup> 'She [wisdom] preserved the first formed father of the world, that was created alone, and brought him out of his fall' (Wisdom of Solomon 10:1, KJV).

<sup>31</sup> 'is finite, limited, and restrained to a certain degree, measure, and kind of being, which is the condition of all things under God [. . .] mixed and compounded of being and not being, perfection and imperfection, fulness and want' (1.1/i.3).

<sup>32</sup> (1.1/i.3).

<sup>33</sup> 'Seeing therefore the imperfection of each thing presupposeth perfection before it, out of which it is taken, whereunto it tendeth and endeavoureth to attain, and whereof it faileth; all things under God [. . .] look back, and hasten to return to that beginning, whence they came forth, and with fixed eyes, bowed knees, and hands lifted up, present themselves before Him that liveth for ever, [. . .] returning thankful praises to him, [. . .] desiring continuance of that they are, supply of that they want, and thinking it their greatest happiness to have but the least resemblance of His divine perfections. [. . .] All things, therefore, after they have come forth from the presence of God, taking view of themselves, and finding their own imperfect and defective nature, fearing to remove too far, fly back unto Him that made them, for support, comfort and stay' (1.1/i.4).

<sup>34</sup> (1.1/i.4-5). '[Y]et is there nothing found in degree of nature inferior unto man, that returneth so far, and approacheth so near, as to know, see, and delight in God, as He is in Himself; but all rest contented, and seek to discern, know, and

aspiration to the perfections of God is limited to the higher creatures.<sup>35</sup> Lesser creatures do not know 'desire' save to be themselves and maintain their existence.<sup>36</sup> Whereas all other creatures are only 'natural', 'men and angels' alone are 'spiritual' and can have a comprehension of 'felicity and bliss'. It is they whom God has called to participate in 'eternal happiness', at least 'in the day of their creation'.<sup>37</sup>

Field is clear as to how we should understand these terms such as 'bliss' and 'participate'. Men and angels are 'called' by God to worship him, to know him, and to 'dwell' with him, even to 'enjoy' him.<sup>38</sup> This is implicit in 'the condition of (their) creation', whereby God created them with inherent 'unsatisfied desires' to 'return towards' himself, desires (and capability) he has denied to lesser creatures.<sup>39</sup> This is not (yet) the return of redeemed sinners from fallen-ness to unfallen-ness, but of unfallen creatures from imperfection towards perfection (and yet never able to attain it), from want to supply, from creature to creator. However, although Field will soon address the subject of the fall and the church thereafter, progressively through to and beyond the coming of Christ, it should be noted that his definition of the church as a 'called' people does not substantially change: we note also Field's (later) definition of the Christian church as 'the multitude and number of those whom Almighty God severeth from the rest of the world by the work of his grace, and *calleth to the participation of eternal happiness*',<sup>40</sup> the latter expression being as used of the pre-fall church.

### 6.2.1.1 – The Centrality of God's Call and God's Grace, and the Perpetuity of the Church

It is important to conclude from this deliberately thorough assessment of the opening pages of Field's work, therefore, that Field sees the church as no ordinary society of people – we note that right from the outset the church, even pre-fall, is a *called* people, that the call is from God himself, and it is a call

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enjoy no more of His divine perfections, than in themselves they possess and partake of Him [. . .] There is nothing, which, in sense of want and imperfection, doth not endeavour to return towards God, from whom all good and happy supply of defect and want proceedeth; neither is there anything found in the world [. . .] which is not carried with some inclination of desire, either seeking that it hath not, or desiring the continuance of that it hath already received from Him, in whom the fulness of all happy good is found' (1.1/i.5).

<sup>35</sup> 'This is peculiar to men and angels, which are carried back with restless motions of unsatisfied desires, and stay not till they come to the open view, clear vision, and happy fruition of God their creator. "O Lord," saith Augustine, "thou madest us for Thyself, and our hearts are restless and unquiet till they rest in Thee"' (1.1/i.5).

<sup>36</sup> They 'have no inclination of desire, but natural, to enjoy and possess themselves and continue that they are', and thus 'have not a general apprehension of all things, but only of some outward and sensible things, in the getting and declining whereof their good doth stand and consist; and, therefore, have their desires likewise contained within the same straits' (1.1/i.6).

<sup>37</sup> 'And this, doubtless, is the reason why no other creatures but only men and angels are capable of felicity and bliss' 'even in the day of their creation'(1.1/i.7; (1.2/i.10).

<sup>38</sup> Angels and men are 'called' to 'know, fear, and worship Him' (1.3/i.14), 'to be subject to their great sovereign' (1.2/i.10), 'to see God, face to face, and to dwell in His presence' (1.2/i.10), to 'felicity and bliss' (1.1/i.7), to 'sweet and happy contentment [. . .] in God' (1.2/i.10), and to 'the sight, presence, and happy enjoying of God their Creator'.

<sup>39</sup> (1.1/i.5-6).

<sup>40</sup> (1.6/i.25), italics mine.

to enjoy the 'felicity and bliss' of a 'return' (in some sense – 'with some inclination of desire')<sup>41</sup> to him.<sup>42</sup> Thus, equally importantly, 'the participation of eternal happiness' which God calls men and angels towards is emphatically a work of God's grace, even before the fall of man places a demand upon the 'more mighty, potent, and prevailing grace'<sup>43</sup> of God to promise and plan the redemption of mankind in Christ. Even the pre-fall church of God is a work of 'the sweet motions of His divine grace',<sup>44</sup> for God 'vouchsafed' his grace to angels and mankind, 'thereby calling them'.<sup>45</sup>

Thus 'men and angels' can only approach and know God at all by his grace, and only then to some certain extent. God's grace will continue to be a central feature in Field's entire work. As Field charts the development of the church throughout the periods of the history of God's dealings with his people through to Christ and beyond, it is always the grace of God which generates the call of God. Every one of the first twelve chapters of Book 1 mentions grace, some of them several times, two of them even in the chapter title.<sup>46</sup> It is even 'by force of grace upholding them' that unfallen angels were and are held from falling.<sup>47</sup>

A brief summary of how Field conceives 'grace' is in order, although the reader is referred to Dawn's doctoral thesis for a very detailed and thorough assessment of this doctrine, especially in relation to other scholars of Field's era, and in particular in comparison with, e.g., Perkins and his 'doctrines of grace'. Field's view of grace, as being God's disposition of goodwill towards his creatures, totally free, unearned and unmerited, is standard for protestant thinking of the era; likewise, the doctrine of grace as inhering in the atonement. Further, though, we note a particular distinctive of Field's position, namely that God implements his grace by his gospel 'call', where this call is to all in the visible church, contra Perkins; but the call is only 'sufficient' for salvation generally, but 'efficacious' for salvation only for the elect. I return to this when I refer to Dawn's work later.

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<sup>41</sup> (1.1/i.5).

<sup>42</sup> 'God, in the day of the creation, called forth all, both men and angels, from among the rest of His creatures, to whom He denied the knowledge and enjoying of Himself, that these only might know, fear, and worship Him in His glorious temple of the world, and be unto Him a selected multitude and holy Church' (1.3/i.14).

<sup>43</sup> (1.3/i.14).

<sup>44</sup> (1.1/i.7).

<sup>45</sup> 'This grace God vouchsafed both men and angels in the day of their creation, thereby calling them to the participation of eternal happiness' (1.2/i.10). And: 'men and angels, which seek an infinite and divine good, even the everlasting and endless happiness, which consisteth in the vision of God, "at whose right hand are pleasures for evermore," [Psalm 16:11] cannot attain their wished good, which is so high and excellent, and far removed from them, unless, by supernatural force, which we call *grace*, they be lifted unto it. For though, by nature, they know God, so far forth as by His effects and glorious works He may be known; yet, as He is in Himself, they know Him not, further than in the light of grace and glory He is pleased to manifest Himself unto them' (1.2/i.8, italics original).

<sup>46</sup> E.g. 'Of the calling of grace, whereby God called out both men and angels from the rest of His creatures, to be unto Him a holy Church' (1.2title/i.8).

<sup>47</sup> (1.3title/i.11).

The thirteenth chapter is the first to be *not* about those who are in or who enter the church, but about those 'that voluntarily go out from the people of God',<sup>48</sup> namely the schismatics (and, subsequently, the heretics) – so perhaps it is no coincidence that this is the first chapter not to mention grace explicitly, but Field's continual emphasis on grace in his argument remains evident.

A second notable feature in Field's theology of the church is 'the promise of Christ concerning the perpetuity of his Church'.<sup>49</sup> God is never without his church. It would not be unreasonable to suppose that Field's insistence on the perpetuity (his term), or indefectibility (an alternative, not Field's), of the church largely drives his concept of the pre-fall church of 'men and angels in the day of their creation', even though the 'men' portion of this church must needs be somewhat nominal, consisting in reality of just Adam and Eve. The expression 'a selected multitude and holy Church'<sup>50</sup> in Field's definition of the pre-fall church quoted above includes the angels – he is not describing just two humans as a multitude here. Nonetheless, the word 'multitude' occurs routinely in Field's ecclesiology. We shall note various references to the perpetuity of the church as we proceed.

### 6.2.2 – The Church after the Fall

The pre-fall church, though its human component was only two in number, and though brief in duration after the creation of the world and mankind, was nonetheless a real church, until the fall, when Adam and Eve 'thereby deprived themselves of that sweet and happy contentment they should have found in God'.<sup>51</sup>

God's grace, however, did not falter, even when men's subjection 'to their great sovereign' did; by God's grace unfallen angels remained so, and by God's grace the elect ('whom He would among the sons of men [...] that happy society of blessed ones') were 'raised up, and severed out of the mass of perdition'.<sup>52</sup> We note that Field here continually employs terminology to emphasise that God is the

<sup>48</sup> (1.14/title/l.xxvi,43).

<sup>49</sup> (1.10/l.35). Also: '(W)e must not think, that God was without a Church among men at any time' (1.4/l.16).

<sup>50</sup> (1.3/l.14).

<sup>51</sup> (1.2/l.10). Also: '[S]uch was the infelicity of these most excellent creatures, that [...] they fell from the love of that which is the chief and greatest good to those [creatures] of meaner quality, and thereby deprived themselves of that sweet and happy contentment they should have found in God; and denying to be subject to their great sovereign, and to perform that duty they owed unto him, were justly dispossessed of all that good, which from Him they received, and under Him should have enjoyed' (1.2/l.10).

<sup>52</sup> '[S]o when there was found amongst these a dangerous apostasy, and departure from Him, He held of the angels so many as He was pleased, and suffered them not to decline or go aside with the rest; and raised up, and severed out of the mass of perdition, whom He would among the sons of men. The angels now confirmed in *grace*, and those men whom in the multitude of His mercies He delivereth out of the state of condemnation, and reconcileth to Himself, do make that happy society of blessed ones, whom God hath loved with an everlasting love. This society is more properly named the Church of God, than the former, consisting of men and angels, in the state of that integrity wherein they were created, in that they which pertain to this happy company, are called to the participation of eternal happiness, with the calling of a more mighty, potent, and prevailing *grace* than the other' (1.3/l.14, italics mine).

initiator and creator of his post-fall church: he 'held', he 'was pleased', he 'suffered them not', he 'raised up', he 'severed out of the mass of perdition whom he would'; he 'confirmed in grace', he 'delivereth', he 'reconcileth', he 'hath loved with an everlasting love'. All this is 'the calling of a more mighty, potent, and prevailing grace than the other'.<sup>53</sup>

God's call is thus an electing call: he will use the actual term 'elect' not a few times later, a term we hold to be equivalent to the non-technical '*whom He would* among the sons of men'. Thus, it is still a call of God's grace, though now with the added overtone of deliverance from judgement and a corresponding emphasis on mercy, as in 'the multitude of His mercies' and 'mass of perdition'.<sup>54</sup>

This is why God's grace in calling out the post-fall church is a 'more mighty' grace, and yet the resultant church needs no great change in definition as we saw above: this new church is, in terms very similar to those employed to describe the pre-fall church, those who 'are partakers of that *grace*, which winneth infallibly, holdeth inseparably, and leadeth indeclinably, in the ways of eternal blessedness'.<sup>55</sup> Yet because of this note of redemption and 'more [...] prevailing grace', '[t]his society is more properly named the Church of God, than the former'.<sup>56</sup> We note, therefore, the beginnings of a gradual development of the nature of the church, in which progressively it becomes in Field's estimation more exalted. The post-fall church of upheld angels<sup>57</sup> and redeemed men is more exalted ('more properly named the Church of God') than the pre-fall church of all angels and men after creation; a redeemed church, to Field, is more exalted on account of the 'more mighty' grace entailed. The Church of the redeemed of God' is 'that more special society'.<sup>58</sup>

So far we have noted a progression as follows: the pre-fall church of men and angels in the state of their creation, then the post-fall church of upheld angels and redeemed men; this is followed in Field's scrupulous system by the 'Church of the redeemed' (redeemed men only, excluding the

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<sup>53</sup> (1.2/i.10), (1.3/i.14).

<sup>54</sup> (1.3/i.14), italics mine. And see: 'He, looking upon them with the eyes of pity, and in the multitude of His compassionate mercies, said of them, as it is in the prophet Jeremy [Jeremiah], "Shall they fall, and shall they not arise? Shall they turn away, and shall they not return? As high as the heaven is above the earth, so great was [sic] His mercies towards them: as far as the east is from the west, so far removed He their sins from them, He redeemed their life from hell, and crowned them with mercy and compassion"' (1.3/i.12).

<sup>55</sup> (1.3/i.15, italics mine).

<sup>56</sup> (1.3/i.14).

<sup>57</sup> Field holds that the fall of angels was irrecoverable, and he argues this at great length from the schoolmen (1.3/i.11ff).

<sup>58</sup> (1.4/i.15). A fuller quotation is: 'All these [members of the post-fall church], as well angels that stood by force of grace upholding them, as men restored by renewing mercy, have a most happy fellowship amongst themselves, and therefore make one Church of God: yet, for that the sons of men have a more full communion and perfect fellowship, being all delivered out of the same miseries, by the same benefit of gracious mercy; therefore, they make that more special society, which may rightly be named the Church of the redeemed of God. This Church began in him in whom sin began, even in Adam, the father of all the living, repenting after his fall and returning to God. For we must not think, that God was without a Church among men at any time' (1.4/i.15).

angels). But the progression does not stop there, needless to say, as in the next section we chart the progress onwards through the rest of the Old Testament up to the time of Christ.

At this point it may be worth considering why the concept of God's *call*, and also of God's *grace*, is so important in Field's scheme. Is he simply reflecting the moderate Calvinism<sup>59</sup> of the Elizabethan settlement? Whilst not doubting the truth of the latter, it is clear that the nature of the church as God's church is vital to Field's rejection of papism, seeing this, as he clearly does, as a usurping of God's prerogative by Papal Rome.

By 'moderate Calvinist' (my, but also others', term) we mean fully Reformed in the sense of accepting the doctrinal precepts of Calvin but not (necessarily) the Geneva church government model, nor the extreme disciplinarian stance of the less moderate nonconformists or separatists. 'High Calvinist' is another term frequently employed to describe the convinced theological position of the vast majority of Elizabethan Church of England divines. They firmly accepted the principles of the Reformation, decrying the apostasy (as they saw it) and corruptions and errors (likewise) of the pope and advocates of the Tridentine Church of Rome; they were fully Reformed in the Calvinistic sense, as had been enshrined in the articles of religion of the Church of England – that is to say, fully embracing the Reformed doctrines of the protestant churches, such as human works being non-meritorious, justification by grace alone through faith alone, the eucharist as not a repeated, real sacrificing of the body of Christ, and the complete and final authority of the Scriptures in all matters of faith; and fully rejecting papist doctrines such as purgatory, the invocation of saints, the concept of non-mortal sin, and transubstantiation. These men were not just semi-Reformed. But on the other hand they were 'moderate', albeit convinced, Calvinists (and thus not advocates-before-time of the later Westminster Confession), in that they rejected the tendencies of some towards extreme Calvinism which were becoming prevalent and popular in the late Elizabethan era, particularly in Cambridge in the mid-1590s, involving an excessive or extreme (as the 'moderates' saw it) emphasis on (double) predestination, disciplinarianism, sectarianism, separatism, non-tolerance and judgementalism. We know that Field was much vexed by these developments. All this has been amply shown by Russell Dawn in his doctoral thesis. Dawn shows that in respect of the later lapsarian controversy, Field is an infralapsarian somewhat before its time,<sup>60</sup> and that he holds such a view because of his ardent desire to 'compose the differences' between the Lutherans and the Calvinists.

<sup>59</sup> See e.g. Patrick Collinson, *The Religion of Protestants* (Clarendon, Oxford, 1982) or Diarmaid MacCulloch, *The Later Reformation in England, 1547-1603* (Palgrave, 2001) for a more extensive assessment of the Calvinism of the English divines; and see e.g. Nicholas Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists* (Clarendon, Oxford, 1987) or Patrick Collinson *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement* (Jonathan Cape, 1967) for a more extensive assessment of the more extreme puritan Calvinism.

<sup>60</sup> Russell Dawn, *Predestination and the Lord's Supper*, 39.



### 6.2.3 – The Church of Abel and onwards

First, a clue as to why Field, from a biblical point of view,<sup>61</sup> holds so strongly to the perpetuity of the church is found in his reference to 'the promise [...] made unto him [Adam] "that the seed of the woman should break the serpent's head"',<sup>62</sup> which Field clearly takes, in line with Western Christian exegetical tradition generally, to be a prophecy of Christ (see shortly). Field continues to pursue his insistence on the perpetuity of the church in an important passage where he traces the indefectible church of God all the way through the story line of the Bible from Adam, through Noah and the Patriarchs, continuing in an extended accolade to Christ himself. That Cain murders Abel does not break the perpetual church, because, raising up a new son (Seth) to Adam, 'God restored His Church', 'continued his true worship', and enabled the continuing knowledge of himself by mankind through his grace, and subsequently 'the true Church continued',<sup>63</sup> until this true church, perpetuated for many centuries ahead, is seen to be that 'of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came', that is, the Christian church.

Secondly, we note further indication of the election and the call of God; 'the Church or *chosen* company of the redeemed of the Lord', and 'He [...] *chose* from among [Noah's] children Shem his eldest son', and 'God *called* [Abraham] out', and 'that *chosen* nation' (italics all mine), and note the reference to Jacob and Esau shortly below.

Thirdly, we note Field's clear understanding, as he sees it, of God's long term purpose in history, initiated even at the very fall itself, and to be fulfilled in Christ, clearly indicated here: 'the promise was made unto [Adam] "that the seed of the woman should break the serpent's head"'; and 'the expectation of that promised seed' (the 'promised seed' refers to Genesis 3:15, the earliest indication in the Scriptures – or hint, at least, but recognised as such by Field – of God's plan of

<sup>61</sup> It must be remembered that for Field, the apostolic 'faith once delivered to the saints' (Jude 3) is definitive for the church – we shall see this in due course.

<sup>62</sup> (1.4/i.16-17). Likewise all references under this heading.

<sup>63</sup> The full passage is reproduced here: 'So soon as Adam had offended, and was called to give an account of that he had done [...] the promise was made unto him "that the seed of the woman should break the serpent's head." Yet for that Abel was the first that the Scripture reporteth to have worshipped God with sacrifice, and to have been divided from the wicked, in whom God had no pleasure, even "cursed Cain," that afterwards shed his innocent blood, therefore we usually say the Church or chosen company of the redeemed of the Lord began in Abel: who being slain by Cain, God restored His Church again in Seth, in whose race and posterity he continued his true worship till Noah. In whose time the wickedness of men being full, He brought in the flood and destroyed the whole world, Noah and his family only excepted, whom He made "a preacher of righteousness" to the world, before and after the flood, and chose from among his children Shem his eldest son, in whose race He would continue the pure and sincere knowledge of Himself, and the expectation of that promised seed that should break the serpent's head. [...] Heber (of whom the people of God were afterwards named Hebrews), who was also, as some think, Melchisedech, in whose posterity the true Church continued; so that God vouchsafed to be called the God of Shem, till the days of Abraham; [...] God called him out [...] and gave him the promise [...] that "in his seed all the nations of the world should be blessed," [...] the father of the faithful [...] Isaac [...] Jacob [...] the twelve tribes of Israel, and that chosen nation of holy Hebrews, who were also named Jews [...] Christ' (1.4/i.16).

redemption in Christ); and 'God called [Abraham] out [...] and gave him the promise'. Field spells out the fulfilment of God's plan in Christ through his called out and perpetuated church, even if that redemption plan did not become transparently clear in history until the time of the apostles' teaching.<sup>64</sup>

Fourthly, it is instructive to note here also an early use of the term 'true Church', which will become prominent – and important – in Field's writing as he delineates his various 'acceptations' of the church, and that it is the true church in which is found 'true worship'. This 'true church' is set against those who defect from it: Abel is set against Cain;<sup>65</sup> Noah is set against the wickedness of his time;<sup>66</sup> the faithfulness of Abraham is set against the 'great declining to idolatry after the flood';<sup>67</sup> Jacob is set against Esau.<sup>68</sup>

At this point we may usefully comment further on the term 'true' as applied to a church. Field uses it frequently, and sometimes capitalises it. It is important to note, however, that this term, 'true', does not introduce yet another categorisation of the church. We meet in Field's writings many terms such as 'Christian church', 'visible church', 'Hebrew church', 'catholic church'. Each of these is a distinct entity, a distinct categorisation of the church; some indicate manifestations of God's church through the timeline of the OT and NT moieties (as we shall see). Others denote Field's various 'acceptations' of the church depending on various degrees of inclusiveness, as we shall also see later. But 'true church' is not a categorisation in the same sense. This may perhaps be best explicated by observing that there is not a true church as opposed to a false church, for the latter is not a church; it is a pretended church in Field's estimation. Rather, a church is a 'true church' as opposed to it not being a church at all. Field is concerned to demonstrate by what criteria one recognises the true as distinct from the false.

In truth, of course, these four points noted from this fourth chapter that we have been studying are all determined by Field's principal concern – the perpetuity of the pure, faithful, true and sincere church (at least the Old Testament church until Christ); and the election, call, and indeed grace, of

<sup>64</sup> 'Great was the honour of this people [the holy nation] above all the nations of the world, for "unto them were committed the oracles of God," to them pertained "the adoption and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law and the service of God, and the promises;" of whom were "the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came"' (1.4/l.17).

<sup>65</sup> 'Abel [...] was divided from the wicked, in whom God had no pleasure, even "cursed Cain," that afterwards shed his innocent blood' (1.4/l.16).

<sup>66</sup> 'the wickedness of men being full, He brought in the flood and destroyed the whole world, Noah and his family only excepted' (1.4/l.16).

<sup>67</sup> '[...] so that the defection was found not only among those that descended of Ham and Japhet, but even among the children of Shem and the sons of Heber also' (1.4/l.16).

<sup>68</sup> 'concerning whom God pronounced, ere yet they were born, or had done good or evil, "the elder shall serve the younger," "I have loved Jacob, and hated Esau"' (1.4/l.17).

God, are all intricately part of God's long term plan for the redemption of the world in Christ. Field is aware of this, and it largely drives his insistence on the perpetuity of the church, and on the gracious and electing call of God. In upholding these doctrines, Field is essentially upholding the long term plan. The on-going development of the church in progressive stages is essentially a quest for the 'seed' promised to Adam and subsequently Abraham – the continuance of the line, or the 'race', (= the perpetuity of the church) essentially guarantees the eventual arrival of the 'breaker' of the serpent's head.<sup>69</sup> This is God's own declared purpose that he will bring about, and does eventually bring about through his perpetuated people, from 'whom as concerning the flesh Christ came'.<sup>70</sup>

Indeed it would be fair to observe that in the history of God's working out of his plan of redemption, as Field has delineated it, the early stages of which are detailed in the quotations above, there is a clear note of 'succession'. Field is content to acknowledge the importance of succession so long as it is conceived in terms of the faithful continuance of God's church in line with God's electing purposes through history. From the Christian church onwards, this means 'in line with' (i.e., in succession to) its apostolic doctrinal roots, and not in terms of mere physical succession. We shall examine this in detail later, when we discuss Field's assessment of succession as one of the notes of the Church of Rome (as held by the Romanists), and Field's counter to that understanding. We shall see that a continuous line of bishops *is* important to Field in order to maintain order and unity in the church, but not because a physical line of succession is important in itself. It is the continuation of God's purposes that is important. Field notes that the original method of appointing bishops was by presbyteral election, and this as a means of maintaining physical succession is important as well as the 'imposition of hands'. For the New Testament church being 'apostolic' means upholding apostolic doctrine and propagating it through the successive ages, as we shall see. For the Old Testament church we see here that it means faithfully upholding and continuing the plan which God initiated in Genesis 3:15. Thus those who are unfaithful get excluded (as noted above), so that God preserves for himself a true, pure, faithful church, into the long term succession of which will come the Saviour in fulfilment of God's plan, as we have seen above and will continue to see.

[B]y His coming all things are become new, a new priesthood, a new law, a new covenant, new sacraments, and a new people, that worship not at Jerusalem, or in the temple alone, but without respect of place "worship God in spirit and in truth."<sup>71</sup>

The mention by Field of the 'new covenant' here raises an issue worth mentioning in passing, although it will not be pertinent to pursue it further. Field clearly accepts standard Reformed

<sup>69</sup> Note again Field's reference to Genesis 3:15, viz: '[...] the expectation of that promised seed that should break the serpent's head' (1.4/i.16).

<sup>70</sup> (1.4/i.17).

<sup>71</sup> (1.4/i.19), quoting John 4:24.

covenant theology, but nowhere does he examine this theology as such. Covenant theology is not a dominant theme for Field in his argumentation against the Romanists, arguably because his concerns about the Romanists do not lie there. Several hundred pages of Field's work can go by with no mention of covenant at all. Where he does mention it, such as in his arguing that the covenant of grace as applied to the children of believing parents does not mean they are born without sin, it is somewhat incidental. The term 'covenant' is one of many available for use, for Field, but not so essential that his delineation of the church hangs materially upon it.

We can now, before bringing this sub-section to a close, summarise Field's progression in demonstrating the development of the church thus:<sup>72</sup>

The Pre-fall church	=	men and angels in the state of their creation
The Post-fall church	=	upheld angels and redeemed men
The 'Church of the Redeemed':		
the Adamic church	=	redeemed men only from Adam onwards
the Abelic church	=	Abel onwards (this being the beginning of the church which excludes some who do not belong, i.e. Cain and his descendants)
the Abrahamic church	=	Abraham onwards (the father of the faithful, to whom the promise was given)
the Hebrew church	=	Moses onwards; the twelve tribes of Israel
Christ	=	the great fulfilment of God's plan of redemption, and God's true Israel
the Christian church:		
the <Apostolic church> <sup>73</sup>	=	the Christian church from the time of the apostles ( <i>including</i> the apostles), and thence onwards to the present time
the <Post-Apostolic church>	=	from <i>after</i> the apostles (thus <i>excluding</i> the apostles), and thence onwards to the present time
the <Present church>	=	the Christian church at the present time

The distinction between the Apostolic church, including the apostles, and the post-Apostolic church (dating from after the death of all the apostles), is important in Field's scheme, because there can be no error of any kind universally held in the former, whether damnable error or not, whether in

<sup>72</sup> All the terms in the left-hand column are mine, except for 'Church of the redeemed', which is Field's.

<sup>73</sup> The terms in angle brackets are mine, but Field himself clearly delineates the Christian church in these three categories.

central non-negotiable doctrines or more peripheral ones, because the apostles were led infallibly into all truth. But the post-Apostolic church can contain error in peripheral doctrines, though no error universally held in central core doctrines.

I have not yet observed how Field delineates the Christian church; see the next section for this. For now, we note that the gradual development<sup>74</sup> of the church through these key stages includes a continuation in the progressive degrees of exaltedness, which we observed in its early stages above (post-fall church more exalted than pre-fall church, church of the redeemed more exalted than that which includes the angels). Now we can add, for example, that the 'Abelic church' is more exalted still, in that 'Abel was the first that the scripture reporteth to have worshipped God with sacrifice, and to have been divided from the wicked'<sup>75</sup> and is so called the 'chosen company of the redeemed of the Lord'; likewise the 'Abrahamic church' has the special privilege of the promise of blessing to all nations through his seed;<sup>76</sup> higher still is the place of the 'Hebrew, or Jewish, church'.<sup>77</sup> This exaltedness reaches its height, in Field's estimation, in Christ himself, as witnessed by the glowing assessment of him here: "'who is God over all, blessed for ever," the propitiation for sins, the merit of reconciliation, the glory of Israel, and the light of the Gentiles, to whom God gave a name above all names [.]' (quoting Romans 9:5), and so on for a page and a half – a paean of praise indeed.

Apart from the 'Church of the redeemed', the terms in the left hand column of the chart above are my terms, not Field's. We have included just those stages which indicate particular new developments. The last in this list, and its three subdivisions, I have included now for completeness' sake, though it is below that we shall be considering this in due course. The final three subdivisions will be seen to be of acute importance in their respective distinctiveness, as they bear upon the question of infallibility of the church.<sup>78</sup> We shall investigate this later, but note it now. Shortly, we shall subdivide the Christian church in another way, so as to demonstrate Field's second major analysis of the church according to various degrees of inclusiveness.

The issue of the infallibility, and, related to it, the indefectibility, of the church is taken as a given by Field. His interest in these is not so much to prove them as necessary doctrines, though he is aware,

<sup>74</sup> We note that this development of the church throughout the biblical time-line in distinct stages in increasing degrees of 'exaltedness' is not to be confused with the dispensationalism that was developed and held in certain circles in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>75</sup> Quotations here continue to be from (1.4/i.16ff).

<sup>76</sup> "'[.] that in his seed all the nations of the world should be blessed," [.] so that all posterities have ever honoured him with the name and title of the father of the faithful' (1.4/i.17).

<sup>77</sup> 'Great was the honour of this people above all the nations of the world, for "unto them were committed the oracles of God," to them pertained "the adoption and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law and the service of God, and the promises"' (1.4/i.17).

<sup>78</sup> See Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition* (Chicago, 1983) for a more extensive exploration of these themes.

of course, of the received doctrine that neither stands upon the worthiness or otherwise of the ministers (including of the pope), and that both stand upon the biblical promise of Christ, first, to be with his church (e.g. at Matthew 28:20; 16:18) and, secondly, to send the Holy Spirit to lead the apostles into all truth (John 16:13). Field's interest rather is to insist that the entire corpus of received Christian truth has always been preserved somewhere in God's visible church – but by no means necessarily where the Romanists think it to have been preserved; it has been preserved in the Eastern churches and in certain parts of and scholars of the Church of Rome but not in the Romanist faction. It is interesting to note that Field is clear that the whole church cannot at any time err in anything essential for salvation, for otherwise there would have been no church at that particular time; rather, every part of received doctrinal truth has always been held somewhere – even within the realm of the Church of Rome, and as I shall observe, Field quotes scores of Fathers and schoolmen to (in his estimation) prove it.

#### 6.2.4 – The Christian Church

We have arrived at the Christian church, or the New Testament church, or the new people of God ushered in by Christ. Field shows how this NT church entails a renewal of many essential aspects of the OT church, such as 'a new priesthood, a new law, a new covenant, new sacraments, and a new people'.<sup>79</sup> More properly, the Christian church was founded by the apostles on the authority of Christ himself.

The society of this new and blessed people began in the apostles, whom Christ the anointed Saviour of the world did choose to be His followers, and to be witnesses of all the things He did and suffered among sinful men. To these our Saviour Christ, after His resurrection, gave most ample commission, to teach the nations and people of the world, and to preach repentance and remission of sins in His name, opening their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures, that so it behoved Him to suffer, and to rise again the third day, whereof they were witnesses.<sup>80</sup>

It is instructive to note here the role of the apostles as witnesses and teachers – we shall see in due course that this is of supreme importance when Field assesses the degrees of infallibility in the church, and correspondingly when he assesses the notes of antiquity, succession, unity, universality, etc. Also, we note again that some of the terminology employed here is reminiscent of the church of the Old Testament, such as 'society', 'blessed people', 'choose', 'the nations' (echoing the promise to Abraham), 'to teach [...] the world' (echoing Noah, 'whom He made "a preacher of righteousness" to the world'), 'repentance' (echoing Adam's supposed repentance); also, in respect of the Christian

<sup>79</sup> '[B]y His coming all things are become new, a new priesthood, a new law, a new covenant, new sacraments, and a new people, that worship not at Jerusalem, or in the temple alone, but without respect of place "worship God in spirit and in truth"' (1.4/i.19).

<sup>80</sup> (1.5/i.19).

church, we have the familiar expressions, 'multitude', 'severeth', 'the participation of eternal happiness', 'society', and the continued emphasis on 'call', 'grace', and election as we shall continue to note below. This does not surprise us, as we have noticed already that there is some considerable continuity of terminology throughout Field's development of the church. We recall that both the pre-fall church, and the Christian church, (and presumably by extension every intermediate conception of the church, as summarised in the chart above), are described as those called 'to the participation of eternal happiness'.

And yet equally all is new as noted above. Supremely new is the apostolic Christian gospel of 'repentance and remission of sins in His name', and thus the Christian church is those who believe in Christ.<sup>81</sup> This new message was of course presaged in the days of the Old Testament, as we have seen, but it was not so clearly known and understood as in and beyond the time of the apostles; it is now 'more clearly revealed by the Gospel'.<sup>82</sup> Furthermore, the progressing degree of exaltedness of the church continues too: it is now 'more glorious and excellent'.<sup>83</sup>

Here Field decides that to use the term 'church' to refer to the Christian church (and correspondingly the term 'synagogue' to refer to the Old Testament church) is not inappropriate ('we dislike it not' – a quaint expression Field uses several times).<sup>84</sup> Or to put it another way, every prior 'acceptation' of the church is a prefiguring of, and anticipation of, and preparation for, that which will fulfil them all, namely the Christian church, or, hereon, simply 'the church'. However, we shall see shortly that Field has still not done with different 'acceptations' of the church, because it will concern him to show how this term, 'the church' still does not precisely define those who belong to it – these acceptations vary greatly according to various degrees of inclusiveness, as we shall shortly see.

Before we move on to this, though, we observe that the strong emphasis on God's election, call and grace pertains to the Christian church just as much as it did to the Old Testament church.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> 'Here was the beginning of that blessed company, which for distinction's sake we call the Christian Church, as consisting of them that believe in Christ now already come in the flesh' (1.5/i.19).

<sup>82</sup> '[T]he faithful, before the manifestation of Christ in the flesh, were so instructed of the Lord, that they assured themselves there was a better life for them elsewhere; and that, neglecting this earthly, momentary, and wretched life, they principally sought the other, which is divine and heavenly. [...] the Lord raised their minds from base and earthly things, to know, seek, and desire the heavenly inheritance and life of the world to come; [...] now, the grace of the life that is to come [is] more clearly revealed by the Gospel' (1.5/i.21).

<sup>83</sup> 'And though the Church of the Old and New Testament be in essence the same, yet for that the state of the Church of the New Testament is in many respects far more glorious and excellent, the fathers and ecclesiastical writers for the most part appropriate the name of the Church to the multitude of believers since the coming of Christ' (1.5/i.20).

<sup>84</sup> (1.5/i.20).

<sup>85</sup> See, e.g. (1.6/i.25).

#### 6.2.4.1 – 'The Divers Sorts of them that pertain to the Church'<sup>86</sup>

We stated earlier that as well as outlining the development of the church through time, culminating in the Christian church, Field also shows how, in his opinion, the church can be delineated in varying degrees of inclusiveness. He addresses the question as to whether 'heretics', 'schismatics', 'hypocrites' and 'wicked men' are in any sense to be counted as members of the church generally considered. Field's answer is an emphatic "Yes", although at the cost of owning a fluid conception of the church and its demarcation. We turn to this now.

In Field's conception of the church all who are part of the visible church on earth are said to be 'partakers of the heavenly calling'. They are said to be 'sanctified by profession of divine truth', in the sense that they belong to the 'set-apart' people. They are even said to use and enjoy the 'means of salvation', i.e. baptism, the Lord's supper, and are perceived, not necessarily correctly, to be in repentance and faith.<sup>87</sup> This does not mean that they are genuine believers, or, equivalently, that they are of the elect; they may be feigned believers or heretics. But they still belong to the visible church. Field's view of a mixed church on earth (the visible church), like Hooker's, is fully in line with the standard Augustinian doctrine, formulated against the Donatist insistence on a pure church, allowing the concept of a visible church much wider than the company of only the elect (a term Field will use now for the first time, though implied hitherto). In England this view of the mixed church followed by Hooker and Field is more of an innovation than it was on the continent, where Calvin and the other magisterial Reformers had argued strongly against the radical Reformers (the Anabaptists) and their belief in a pure church on earth. To Field, the Christian church in its widest sense is the visible church of all those who in any way profess to be Christian and who visibly belong to the church. That is, it consists of those who by professing divine Christian truth, at least as heard by and understood by their contemporaries, and not separating from the body of professing believers, are (in some sense at least) under the gracious call of God.<sup>88</sup> We note, as many times before, the continuing emphasis on grace and call.

But we note a new emphasis (new in Field's work, that is, since the commencement of his own analysis of the Christian church), namely the knowledge and profession of Christian truth revealed in Christ. In the quotations above, we have seen the following expressions used (working backwards

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<sup>86</sup> This is the title of (1.7/i.25).

<sup>87</sup> 'They that are partakers of the heavenly calling, and sanctified by the profession of divine truth, and the use of the means of salvation, are of very divers sorts' (1.7/i.25).

<sup>88</sup> A fuller quotation is: 'the Church having her being and name, from the calling of grace, all they must needs be of the Church, whom the grace of God in any sort calleth out from the profane and wicked of the world, to the participation of eternal happiness, by the excellent knowledge of divine, supernatural, and revealed verity, and use of the good, happy and precious means of salvation: but they only perfectly and fully in respect of outward being, which profess the whole truth in unity' (1.7/i.26).



through them): 'the whole truth', 'the excellent knowledge of divine, supernatural, and revealed verity', 'sanctified by the profession of divine truth', 'the knowledge of such supernatural verities as [...] He hath revealed in Christ His Son', 'clearly revealed by the Gospel'.<sup>89</sup> The same is true of his treatment of other loci, such as the sacraments, though in this study we shall not be paying particular attention to Field's doctrine of the sacraments.<sup>90</sup>

This new emphasis on the profession of apostolic Christian truth we shall see to be consistently important, and we frequently encounter it, in Field's developing argument, especially when he is assessing which is the true church, and who is in and who is out of the church in its various 'acceptations', according to just how much Christian truth is professed, and in what manner (e.g., as in 'they [...] which profess the whole truth in unity'),<sup>91</sup> as we shall now see.

For there are some that profess the truth delivered by Christ the Son of God, but not *wholly* and *entirely*, as heretics; some that profess the whole saving truth, but not in *unity*, as schismatics; some that profess the whole saving truth in unity, but not in *sincerity*, and singleness of a good and sanctified mind, as hypocrites and wicked men, not outwardly divided from the people of God; and some that profess the whole saving truth in unity, and sincerity of a good and sanctified heart.<sup>92</sup>

The last of these is, of course, the company of the elect: 'they only principally, fully, and absolutely are of the Church, whom divine grace leadeth infallibly'.<sup>93</sup> That is to say, the elect are they for whom the call of God's grace is effectual, 'indeclinabl[e]' and for eternity, though others partake of the benefits in the church here and now, though to a lesser degree; they are not 'principally, fully, and absolutely' of the church.<sup>94</sup>

The expression, 'principally, fully, and absolutely', we meet several times in one variation or another (e.g. 'principally, fully, effectually and finally').<sup>95</sup> It will be evident, therefore, that although Field admits many divers sorts to membership of the church in a general sense, there is nonetheless in his

<sup>89</sup> These expressions are found in (1.5,6,7).

<sup>90</sup> Thus, e.g., 'such other precious and happy means as He hath appointed to further and set forward the work of their salvation' (1.6/i.25).

<sup>91</sup> (1.7/i.26).

<sup>92</sup> (1.7/i.25), italics original.

<sup>93</sup> '[T]hey only principally, fully, and absolutely are of the Church, whom divine grace leadeth infallibly, and indeclinably by these means to the certain and undoubted possession of wished blessedness; because in them only grace manifesteth her greatest and most prevailing force, without which efficacy of grace, winning infallibly, holding inseparably, and leading indeclinably, no man ever attained to salvation; and of which whoso is partaker shall undoubtedly be saved' (1.7/i.26).

<sup>94</sup> 'In the benefits of this grace, none but the elect and chosen of God, whom he hath loved with an everlasting love, have any part or fellowship, though others concur with them [...] When we say, therefore, none but the elect of God are of the Church; we mean not that others are not at all, nor in any sort of the Church, but that they are not "principally, fully, and absolutely;" and that they are not of that especial number of them who partake and communicate in the most perfect work, force, and effect of saving grace' (1.7/i.27, double quotation marks original to Field).

<sup>95</sup> (1.8/i.27).

opinion a central core of true and sincere believers – a core which is real, and known to God (because those of this number are so by his effective call of grace), though not able to be identified infallibly by any other than God himself (as we shall see). Further, there are those of the elect who have not yet been effectively called nor have responded, and are thus not yet of the church; and correspondingly there are they who are part of the visible church, and enjoy some of the benefits thereof, but who are not of the elect, and who fall within Field's category of 'hypocrites and wicked men'. This is at variance with the more fixed view of the church, tending to identify it with, and only with, the elect. But Field, though agreeing absolutely that the church does have a core of the elect, is not prepared to have a conception of the church as narrow as this alone, for otherwise the church would be completely unidentifiable. If, as is the case, the elect are infallibly known only to God, then that entity which is identifiable to man must inevitably include others. So Field widens the definition of the church progressively in various degrees to include heretics, schismatics, hypocrites and the wicked and true believers.<sup>96</sup> Again, we see that Field's conception of the church very much reflects the Augustinian view.

#### 6.2.4.1 – The Christian Church - Summary

We can summarise Field's categorisation in the following chart:

The visible church	=	heretics + schismatics + hypocrites and wicked men + the elect
	=	the entire church generally considered (all professing Christians)
	=	profession of the truth delivered by Christ
The orthodox church <sup>97</sup>	=	schismatics + hypocrites and wicked men + the elect (excluding heretics)
	=	right-believing Christians
	=	profession of the <i>entire</i> truth delivered by Christ
The catholic church	=	hypocrites and wicked men + the elect (excluding schismatics)
	=	men holding the faith in <i>unity</i>
	=	the perfect visible church
	=	the true church
	=	those 'perfectly and fully' <sup>98</sup> of the church

<sup>96</sup> See the recent quotation from (1.7/1.25).

<sup>97</sup> NB, not the Eastern Orthodox Church, but lower-case 'o'.

<sup>98</sup> (1.7/1.26).

The invisible church = 'the elect and chosen of God'<sup>99</sup>  
 = the mystical body of Christ  
 = men holding the faith in unity and in *sincerity*  
     (excluding feigned believers, hypocrites and wicked men)  
 = those who are 'principally, fully, and absolutely' of the church  
 = 'the best and most essential parts'<sup>100</sup> of the church

Wherein:

*Heretics* profess the truth delivered by Christ, but not *wholly*

*Schismatics* profess the whole saving truth, but not in *unity*

*Hypocrites, feigned believers and wicked men* profess the whole saving truth in unity,  
     but not in *sincerity*

*The elect* profess the whole saving truth in unity and sincerity

All these are partakers of the heavenly calling, and sanctified by the profession of the truth, and consequently are all in some degree and sort of that society of men, whom God calleth out unto Himself, and separateth from infidels, which is rightly named the Church.<sup>101</sup>

<sup>99</sup> (4.1/II.391).

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>101</sup> (1.7/I.26).

## Chapter 7

### – Field’s Notes of the Church; Identifying the True Church –

#### 7. Abstract of this chapter

In this chapter I analyse Field’s ‘notes’ or ‘marks’ of the church, particularly against Cardinal Bellarmine, but also contrasting Field’s notes with those of other protestants, and briefly demonstrating the history of the notes as developed during the preceding centuries. In addition, I observe how one very able modern theologian made a mistake, subsequently corrected, in understanding Field’s ecclesiology.

#### 7.1 – The Nicene Notes

The notes [...] which perpetually distinguish the true Catholic Church from all other societies of men and professions of religions in the world, are three: First, the entire profession of those supernatural verities, which God hath revealed in Christ his Son: Secondly, the use of such holy ceremonies and sacraments as he hath instituted [...]: Thirdly, an union or connexion of men in this profession and use of these sacraments, under lawful pastors and guides, appointed, authorized, and sanctified, to direct and lead them in the happy ways of eternal salvation.<sup>1</sup>

The concern to delineate the true church by a simple formulation of a few defining properties or characteristics, or ‘marks’, or (the term that Field and others of this era principally use) ‘notes’,<sup>2</sup> has a long pedigree. It is often noted that scripture itself observes the defining characteristics of a church in such terms as those found, for example, in Acts 2:42, ‘They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer’, or in Ephesians 4:5, ‘One Lord, one faith, one baptism’. In the centuries after the early Fathers more formal sets of defining characteristics were employed. Thus, commencing, it is thought, with pope Boniface VIII’s famous papal bull of 1302, *Unam Sanctam*, the four-fold formulation of the church from the Nicene (or Niceno-Constantinopolitan) Creed of 325/381CE, namely, ‘We<sup>3</sup> believe [...] in one, holy, catholic, and

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<sup>1</sup> (2.2/1.65).

<sup>2</sup> The term ‘notes’ is the traditional translation into English of the Latin ‘*notae*’, or more fully ‘*notae ecclesiae*’ (‘notes of the church’). ‘*Notae ecclesiae*’, or ‘notes of the church’, are the Latin and English terms traditionally employed by writers of the medieval and early modern periods; ‘marks of the church’ is a directly equivalent late modern term. These terms refer to the observable characteristics of the church by which one may discern what is the true church and what is not.

<sup>3</sup> The plural ‘We’, rather than the singular ‘I’, is the 325/381CE original.

apostolic church',<sup>4</sup> was commonly used to provide four distinguishing characteristics of the church during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Boniface's opening line was, 'By the requirement of the faith we are obliged to believe and hold one, holy, catholic, and indeed apostolic church', echoed by or echoing almost exactly the same words by James of Viterbo in his *On Christian Government* written in about the same year.<sup>5</sup> Both of these quotations are observed by Jaroslav Pelikan in his *The Christian Tradition*. Pelikan observes that there had been considerable neglect of discussion or formulation of the doctrine of the church during previous centuries, even by theologians such as Aquinas and Lombard. But following Boniface's bull, the next two centuries saw a considerable renewed interest in the doctrine of the church, not least given that the Western Schism occurred during forty years of this interval. Thus Pelikan cites four particular treatises published over the space of the next two centuries, dealing respectively with the four Nicene notes; these were Jean de Gerson's *The Unity of the Church*, 1409, Peter Chelčický's *The Holy Church*, 1420s, Nicholas of Cusa's *Catholic Concordance*, 1432, and Gabriel Biel's *In Defence of Apostolic Obedience*, 1462.

The four 'Nicene' adjectives are sometimes known as the four 'attributes' (or, Küng, 'dimensions')<sup>6</sup> of the church, and served as marks of the church without contention in both the Eastern and the Latin Churches (and latterly, as a constituent of the Nicene Creed, by the Lutheran, protestant and Anglican churches). Avis<sup>7</sup> describes these 'Nicene' notes, as does McGrath.<sup>8</sup> McGrath's work is a beginners' introduction, but nonetheless, intriguingly and unaccountably, in a section entitled 'The "Notes" of the Church' in this compendium of Christian theology, McGrath gives attention *only* to this particular Nicene formulation, and no consideration is given to any others, either from earlier (see shortly) or from Reformation eras or later, this latter being important to our study. Especially, we note that McGrath shows no recognition of the immense and ultimately intractable debate between Rome's spokesmen and the Reformation's.

The disagreement between East and West prior to the Reformation, or between Romanist and protestant at and after the Reformation, was not over the validity of these four 'Nicene' marks as such – no-one disagreed that they were suitable as identifying marks – but over which of their churches is identified by them (especially concerning the words 'one', symbolising unity, and

<sup>4</sup> See, for example, J.N.D. Kelly's *Early Christian Creeds* and Philip Schaff's *Creeds of Christendom*.

<sup>5</sup> Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition* (Chicago, 1984), iv, 69,70.

<sup>6</sup> Hans Küng, *The Church* (London: Search Press, 1968).

<sup>7</sup> Paul Avis in his *The Richard Hooker Lecture 2009*: see [http://www.exeter-cathedral.org.uk/\\_assets/vocation\\_of\\_anglicanism.pdf](http://www.exeter-cathedral.org.uk/_assets/vocation_of_anglicanism.pdf) (accessed February 2012) and in his *Reshaping Ecumenical Theology: The Church Made Whole?* (London: T&T Clark, 2010).

<sup>8</sup> Alister E. McGrath, *Christian Theology: An Introduction*, 5<sup>th</sup> edition (Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 390ff.

'catholic', symbolising universality)<sup>9</sup> – each denying the other to be a true church; that is, each denying the marks to apply appropriately to the other.

## 7.2 – Universality, Antiquity and Consensus

But there was an earlier set of agreed marks of the church. Pelikan<sup>10</sup> observes in a chapter entitled 'The Orthodox Consensus', that in the fifth and sixth centuries, after the Council of Nicea, three defining marks of the church (and correspondingly of Christian doctrine, the two being necessarily parallel, the church being not the true church unless its doctrine be the true doctrine, and *vice-versa*),<sup>11</sup> carried common affirmation as a formulary of the orthodox catholic tradition. Pelikan writes, of catholic unity, 'The gravest peril to the oneness of "the one true faith" [...] came from the loss of oneness in the "one true church," for the two were conceived as inseparable'. These early marks were formulated by Vincent of Lérins as 'universality, antiquity and consensus' (In Latin, '*ubique, semper, ab omnibus*' ('everywhere, always, by all')),<sup>12</sup> and echoed in the sixth century work *On the Catholic Faith*, presumed by Boethius, 'This catholic church, then, spread throughout the world, is known by three particular marks: whatever is believed and taught in it has the authority of the scriptures [antiquity], or of universal tradition [universality], or at least of its own and proper usage [consensus]'.<sup>13</sup>

Pelikan explains that universality means that all true doctrine be professed by the whole church everywhere (East and West together – even before the Great Schism of 1054 there had been tensions and misunderstandings), quoting Jerome, 'all the churches [...] one great horde of people [...] with one voice',<sup>14</sup> rather than being the fancy of a private individual or local grouping. A mark of this universality is, says Pelikan, the four universal councils,<sup>15</sup> commonly acknowledged as being the proving-ground of all orthodoxy.<sup>16</sup> He quotes Pope Gregory I, 'all the four synods of the holy universal church we receive as we do the four books of the holy gospels', indicating Gregory's confidence that the truth enshrined in these councils is apostolic Christian truth. This leads Pelikan directly to the mark of antiquity, or universality in time. All true doctrine is that which has always been believed; indeed, in terms of fundamental truths about God this is pressed back past the time of Christ to the very beginning of the OT church. Pelikan writes, 'It was inconceivable to the

<sup>9</sup> See shortly below for Field's analysis of unity, universality and the name 'catholic'.

<sup>10</sup> Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition*, I, 332-339.

<sup>11</sup> Pelikan, IV, 59.

<sup>12</sup> Vincent of Lérins, *Commonitory*, 2.3.

<sup>13</sup> Boethius, *On the Catholic Faith*, 70 of the Loeb Classical Library Edition, quoted by Pelikan (I, 333).

<sup>14</sup> Jerome, *Against Vigilantius*, 5.

<sup>15</sup> Nicea 325CE, Constantinople 381CE, Ephesus 431CE, Chalcedon 451CE.

<sup>16</sup> Pope Gregory I, *Epistles*, 3.10.

exponents of the orthodox consensus that there could be any contradiction between Scripture properly interpreted and the tradition of the ancient fathers [...]. It was imperative to recognize the continuity between the teaching of Scripture and the doctrine of the orthodox fathers [...] The succession was uninterrupted and the continuity unbroken'.<sup>17</sup> The doctrinal tradition handed down by the Fathers since the apostolic times is at one with teaching of scripture. Thus the third of Vincent's marks, namely common consensus, is the natural partner of the first two marks. Indeed, it is hard really to draw any sharp distinction between the three marks – they belong together as three aspects of universality. That the term 'universal' connotes the notion of 'all' does not mean that there was, or could be, no dissent, schism or heresy anywhere; but rather that any such deviation from the norm was private or localised or very much the minority, and that the orthodox consensus was the predominant opinion of the church in all places, in all time, and by the consent of 'all'.

We note this earlier formulation of marks of the church here because the insistence on universality, antiquity and common consent (unity) bears directly upon what Field has to say, as we shall see. It is worth observing that although 'succession' as such is not one of the three marks we are considering, it is as an idea concomitant with them, as in Pelikan's words above, and as in his quotation from Augustine, concerning 'the testimony of the catholic church [...] supported by a succession of bishops from the original sees of the apostles to the present time'.<sup>18</sup> Although clearly Augustine uses the term 'succession' as being one of a line of bishops, equally clearly the important consideration for him is that those bishops faithfully transmit orthodox apostolic doctrine. Pelikan agrees, 'any teaching was to be condemned despite its age if it deviated from what had always been taught by the orthodox succession of bishops and theologians'.<sup>19</sup> We remark on this now because 'succession' too, as a mark of the church, is very much Field's concern, as we shall see.

Before the sixteenth century Reformation under Luther, Zwingli and later Calvin and others, the Church of Rome, with its long-settled condemnation of the Eastern churches as being not true churches, had (in its own estimation) no difficulty in the West holding itself to be the one true church.<sup>20</sup> However, this situation changed with the Reformation, at which point the Church of Rome and the reformed / protestant churches each sought to claim that the other was not a true church, at least in the fullest sense.<sup>21</sup> With the East and Rome and protestantism all claiming to be marked out

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<sup>17</sup> Pelikan, I, 336-7.

<sup>18</sup> Augustine, *Against Faustus the Manichean*, 11.2.

<sup>19</sup> Pelikan, I, 338.

<sup>20</sup> It is this Romanist self-acclamation that is one of Field's principal targets for criticism, as we shall see.

<sup>21</sup> The question is of course very complex, including matters such as the validity of baptism as conducted by the various parties in one another's estimation, the validity of ministerial orders likewise, etc., and it is beyond the remit of this study to treat the subject fully. The ensuing brief analysis simply sets the context for our treatment of Field's notes of the church.

by the four 'Nicene' attributes of the church, a more searching look at the matter of the church's distinguishing marks was called for. The Reformers realised that in knowingly breaking from Rome, they were parting from the very institution that considered itself to be the true church; and they knew full well that Rome would charge them with schism. The matter of the marks of the church then became a Reformation issue as well as an East-West issue, complicated by the debate within Reformation circles as to whether *discipline* should be reckoned as a mark of the church, or not. The latter we shall examine shortly, but for now we note that a new formulation of the marks of a true church was *de rigueur* for the Reformers – they had to defend their own conception of a true church by means other than the historical four Niceno-Constantinopolitan attributes. A brief survey of this development is in order.

### 7.3 – Luther

At the beginning of the continental Reformation Luther argued that Rome's claim to be the one true church was bogus.<sup>22</sup> Although Luther concedes that the Roman church is a church in some sense,<sup>23</sup> he denies to it the term 'catholic' because of its own exclusion of all other churches.<sup>24</sup> Writing of the holiness of the church, quoting the Apostles' Creed, he says, "'I believe in one holy Christian church.'" [...] Its holiness exists in the word of God and true faith',<sup>25</sup> thereby paving the way for the biblical doctrine of the apostolic Christian faith to be at the foundation of the Reformation theology (as the Reformers saw it) of the church. This quotation from Luther immediately follows the more famous quotation in the same article, 'God be praised, a seven-year-old child knows what the church is: holy believers and "little sheep who hear the voice of their shepherd"', quoting John 10:3; Luther on several occasions uses the example of a seven-year-old child, seven being in contemporary estimation the earliest age of discernment. He calls the Apostles' Creed the 'children's creed' too. In asking 'where the Church of God may be found', he answers by listing what he considers to be vital characteristics, including first and foremost that it 'is to be recognised by holding fast the sacred word of the Almighty [...] the word of God [...] that outward word which is preached' (i.e., biblical Christian doctrine – he calls this 'the chief point to be observed, and the high mark of holiness in the

<sup>22</sup> 'But let the Romanists explain to us *what* the Church is—which is the Church—and *where* the Church is. Their great object has been to represent themselves as the Church in the persons of their pontiff, cardinals, bishops, and priests', Martin Luther, *On Councils and Churches*, 1539, tr. C. B. Smyth (London: 1847), Part III, 175; also (same work, different translation from the German) *ibid.*, tr. C. M. Jacobs, in *Luther's Works*, ed. E. W. Gritsch (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1966), xli, 148-177; also the same in *Selected Writings of Martin Luther*, ed. by Theodore G. Tappert (Fortress, 2007), iv.

<sup>23</sup> So does Calvin – see, for instance, *Institutes*, book 4, ch. 2.

<sup>24</sup> 'We admit that the Romanists give themselves a proper appellation in the term Church [...]; but there must not be the addition of "Catholic," for they cannot appropriate it [...]. Yet if they had understood the words of the primitive creed, *the Holy, Catholic Church*, they would have discerned both what was, and what was not, the Church. But it is my own firm belief that the Church of Christ is not to be circumscribed within any one place, person, or period', *ibid.* (Smyth tr.), 175-6. The point Luther is making is that Rome claims the church is 'here, here only', in the papal church.

<sup>25</sup> Martin Luther, *Schmalkald Articles* (1537), iii, 12.



flock of the Redeemer'); this followed by the two sacraments, then discipline (the 'exercise of the keys'), and the ordained ministry. He writes too of discipleship and public worship, and also Christian suffering ('the holy possession of the sacred cross'), as being characteristics of a true church. It is clear that in nominating the above characteristics he is stating his marks of the church. Thus, for example, in respect of the first, God's word, 'wherever, therefore you see and hear the word proclaimed, and received with faith, [...] there you may be certain of the presence of a true church [...]. For *God's word* cannot exist without *God's people*, and God's people cannot be separated from God's word'. Of the sacraments, they 'distinguish the true congregation of Christ's Church'. The keys are 'a distinguishing badge',<sup>26</sup> and so on with the others.

We note, then, that even though Luther's ecclesiology is not what he is most well-known for, he has nonetheless written on the doctrine of the church (as noted above), and in various places and not just in *On Councils and Churches*. We recognise, though, that he does not in fact anywhere formally set out his marks of the church as such, systematically and consistently, not even in his most thorough ecclesiological treatment, that which I have cited in part III of *On Councils and Churches*. He could arguably be read as holding that there is one mark of the church (because of his emphasis on doctrine), or two marks (doctrine, sacraments), or four (adding discipline and ministry), or even seven (adding the other three mentioned above). No matter; what is important is that he is very clear about what constitutes a true church. I would argue that when a particular theologian delineates the true church by noting a series of distinguishing characteristics, it is not too important whether or not clear terminology, such as 'marks', 'notes', or 'properties', is consistently used. What is important is that for each such characteristic an 'if and only if' relationship is averred between it and the existence of the true church, such as in Luther's clear 'no keys means no church' quoted above. However, if a theologian does use a term such as 'marks', and nominates a clear set, but omits something else, such as Calvin not including discipline as a mark, then we should probably conclude that the omission is deliberate.<sup>27</sup> Also, it is important to make a distinction between the marks of a true church, and the marks of a true Christian disciple. So we shall note below that Hooker tends to discuss the marks of a disciple as a member of the church, but not so much the church as an entity itself, except by inference. Field, we shall see, discusses the marks of the church, and definitively so, by specifically nominated marks or notes of his own.

<sup>26</sup> '[W]herever you behold forgiveness or reproof dealt impartially to all, be assured that there you behold a visible proof of Christ's presence with his people. Where there are none of the people of God, there no keys exist; and where the keys do not exist, there also the Almighty has not a people' (Martin Luther, *ibid.*, Smyth (tr.), 182; except where footnoted otherwise, all quotations in this paragraph are from 175ff, italics original).

<sup>27</sup> Why Calvin, despite being very keen on church discipline, did not include it as a formal mark is perhaps intriguing, but is beyond the remit of this study.

Luther holding as many as seven marks should not, though, obscure the reality that for him the word of God, the gospel, the apostolic doctrine of Christ, clearly taught, believed and obeyed, is the dominant one. We shall see that this is true for Field also, who reflects Luther's marks of word, sacraments and ministry, with discipline (at a proportionate level) being important for Field too, and we shall see all this shortly. Elsewhere Field expresses his concern that there are some – he is referring to Puritan nonconformism – who complain excessively of want of discipline. But for Field proportionate discipline<sup>28</sup> is a consequent of (and the responsibility of) an ordained ministry, as we shall see.

#### 7.4 – Calvin

The Reformers and their successors, including the Anglican divines and Field in particular as we shall see, were generally agreed on at least two marks of the church, namely Christian doctrine and the two sacraments (as recognised by the Reformed churches) of baptism and the Lord's Supper. Calvin, for instance asserts: 'Accordingly, inasmuch as it was of importance to us to recognise [the church], the Lord has distinguished it by certain marks, and as it were symbols [. . .]. The knowledge of his body, inasmuch as he knew it to be more necessary for our salvation, he has made known to us by surer marks [. . .]. Wherever we see the word of God sincerely preached and heard, wherever we see the sacraments administered according to the institution of Christ, there we cannot have any doubt that the church of God has some existence'.<sup>29</sup> Such remarks adequately represent views held by a number of the Reformers. We should add that although Calvin does not include discipline in the church explicitly as a third 'mark' of the church, nonetheless he is keen to emphasise the importance of discipline in the church. Indeed, he sometimes mentions discipline together with his two marks, putting it on the same footing as them, as thus: 'For what service can [Romanist mass priests] perform to the church? The preaching of the word, the care of discipline, and the administration of the Sacraments, they have shaken off as burdens too grievous to be borne'.<sup>30</sup>

Another point, important to make, is that although a typical Reformer might enunciate a number of marks of the church, nonetheless very typically one mark stands as the most fundamental and vital – usually the Christian doctrine of the word of God. This is clearly the case for Luther, who having

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<sup>28</sup> My term here.

<sup>29</sup> Calvin, *Institutes*, 4.1.8-9 (Beveridge translation). Calvin continues: 'We have said that the symbols by which the Church is discerned are the preaching of the word and the observance of the sacraments [. . .] when the preaching of the gospel is reverently heard, and the sacraments are not neglected, there for the time the face of the Church appears without deception or ambiguity [. . .] Wherefore let these marks be carefully impressed upon our minds, and let us estimate them as in the sight of the Lord. There is nothing on which Satan is more intent than to destroy and efface one or both of them—at one time to delete and abolish these marks, and thereby destroy the true and genuine distinction of the Church' *Institutes*, 4.1.10-11.

<sup>30</sup> *Institutes*, 4.5.10. Calvin develops a doctrine of discipline in *Institutes* 4.11-12.

become convinced that the central doctrine of justification by faith that he had discovered was 'the article upon which the Church stands or falls' had written: 'anywhere you hear or see [the Word of God] preached, believed, confessed, and obeyed, do not doubt that there the True Holy Catholic Church must be [. . .] And even should there be no other mark than this, it would suffice to show that there a Holy Christian People must be [. . .] Where there is the Word, there also is faith; and where there is faith, there also is the True Church'.<sup>31</sup> A host of others, including Calvin and Beza, and certainly Field as we shall see, echo this placing of God's word above all others in importance.

A further aspect of Calvin's thought needs to be mentioned here: the Reformers, and Calvin in particular (and Field), had to deal with the undoubted reality that they were breaking from an institution that considered itself to be the true (and thus only) church. In the eyes of Rome, the Reformers were schismatics, and thus not of the church. Calvin's well-known solution, building on Augustine, was to distinguish between the church 'invisible' (or church 'universal'; Field and Hooker also use the term 'mystical'), which is the whole company of the elect, known accurately only to God, on the one hand, and the church 'visible', the aggregation of all those at any time on earth who profess Christ, whose identity is in the eyes of fallible humanity. To Rome, prior to the Reformation, this distinction was largely meaningless and unnecessary. Certainly, Rome had had its own share of internal struggles for many centuries, with the Rome-Avignon schism of 1378 perhaps the most important case in point; indeed, it had always been a matter of debate, not always with a unanimous outcome, as to just which quarrelsome or idiosyncratic individual or faction qualified as 'heretical' or 'schismatic'. But nonetheless, with the East long since outcast by Rome, there was in its view no other church on earth – the Church of Rome, down through the Christian ages, and with relatively minimal dissent within its ranks, held its own view of the church's identity (i.e. itself, the Church of Rome) to be equal to God's view. We recall the papal bull of Boniface VIII, *Unam Sanctam*, which closed with the assertion that it was the Roman pope to whom 'every human creature must be subject to be saved'.<sup>32</sup> All this time the alternative view, that the worldwide 'catholic church' was not coterminous with the 'apostolic church' (the Church of Rome), was very much a minority one.<sup>33</sup> Essentially, if you were a baptised, communicant member of the Church of Rome, and not excommunicated, then you were a member of the elect of God, and *vice-versa*. But with the Reformation came the greatest challenge to this notion since the great East-West divide.

Calvin (and Luther before him) realised that whatever is the delineation of the identity of the church, there are certainly those *within* it that are not truly *of* it (miscreants and heretics, as we have seen

<sup>31</sup> Martin Luther, *On Councils and Churches*, 1539, tr. C. B. Smyth (London: 1847), Part III.

<sup>32</sup> Quoted in Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition*, IV, ch. 2, 69.

<sup>33</sup> See Pelikan, *ibid.*, 70.

above in Field's analysis), and there are those *outside* it that are truly *of* it – i.e., they belong to the elect of God, albeit not yet gathered. Calvin quoted Augustine's 'there are very many sheep without, and very many wolves within'<sup>34</sup> to this effect. Thus Calvin's conception of a 'pure church' was the church invisible, as seen by God, whereas Rome held itself to be the pure and only (and very much visible) church. Alongside this, Calvin knew the undoubted reality of a church on earth, the visible church, which was in measure corrupt in all its manifestations, whether un-Reformed or Reformed. Field, as we have seen, echoes Calvin.

The Church of England asserts a position like that of Calvin in (for example) its Articles of Religion and its Ordinal, without actually using the term 'marks'. So Article XIX, 'Of the Church', *states*, 'The visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men, in which the pure Word of God is preached, and the Sacraments be duly ministered according to Christ's ordinance [. . .]',<sup>35</sup> and in the service for the ordering of priests the bishop asks the ordinand, 'Bee you perswaded that the holy scriptures conteine sufficiently al doctrine required of necessitie for eternall saluation, thorow faith in Jesu Christ? And are you determined with the sayd Scriptures, to instruct the people committed to your charge [. . .]? [. . .] Will you then giue your faithfull diligence alwayes, so to minister the doctrine and Sacraments [. . .]?'.<sup>36</sup>

This twofold delineation of the church by the two undisputed notes of doctrine and sacraments is almost universal amongst the Reformers, though some add other notes variously conjoined. One slight variation in the form of the first note might usefully be considered, namely, that sometimes it is enunciated as (Field) 'profession of divine verities',<sup>37</sup> or (Calvin) 'the administration of doctrine' or 'the Church is founded on the doctrine of the apostles and prophets',<sup>38</sup> or the like – in other words, a true church upholds, defends and professes apostolic Christian truth; and sometimes it is enunciated in terms of *preaching* such as in Article XIX quoted above and by Calvin as quoted above. This slight distinction is of no importance for our purposes in this study, and will not detain us.

What is perhaps much more pertinent is that some Reformers, commencing as early as Luther, explicitly included a third note or mark of the church, namely that of *discipline*.<sup>39</sup> This position, in the context of the first century of the Reformation, is often associated with the Anabaptists, though not

<sup>34</sup> *Institutes*, 4.1.8, quoting Augustine's *Homilies on St John*, tractate 45.12.

<sup>35</sup> Articles of Religion, 1562, *Book of Common Prayer* (1662).

<sup>36</sup> *The Forme and Manner of Making and Consecrating Bishops Priestes and Deacons*, Book of Common Prayer, 1559 (and edition of 1634), Ordinal, questions asked of the ordinand by the bishop. The Book of Common Prayer, 1662, reflects this exactly.

<sup>37</sup> Field, (2.2/1.64).

<sup>38</sup> Calvin, *Institutes*, 4.2.1.

<sup>39</sup> We have argued above that the power of the keys was, for Luther, a necessary mark of the church, it not mattering if he did not actually use that term explicitly.

only them. On the continent Bucer and others, as well as Luther, seem, according to some scholars, to have held this.<sup>40</sup> The Belgic Confession<sup>41</sup> in Article 29 states: 'The marks, by which the true Church is known, are these: if the pure doctrine of the gospel is preached therein; if she maintains the pure administration of the sacraments as instituted by Christ; if church discipline is exercised in punishing of sin: in short, if all things are managed according to the pure Word of God, all things contrary thereto rejected, and Jesus Christ acknowledged as the only Head of the Church. Hereby the true Church may certainly be known, from which no man has a right to separate himself'.<sup>42</sup>

### 7.5 – The Church of England

This is also echoed by, for example, the Church of England bishop of Salisbury, John Jewel, in his homily for Whitsunday (Part 2),<sup>43</sup> 'The true Church is an universal congregation or fellowship of God's faithful and elect people [. . .]. And it hath always three notes or marks whereby it is known. Pure and sound doctrine, the Sacraments ministered according to Christ's holy institution, and the right use of Ecclesiastical discipline. This description of the Church is agreeable both to the Scriptures of God, and also to the doctrine of the ancient Fathers, so that none may justly find fault therewith'. The actual formularies of the Church of England do not speak of 'marks' or 'notes' as such, but the principles behind the three marks that we are now delineating are clearly indicated in, for example, the ordinal, where the last of the questions quoted above, asked of the ordinand by the bishop, is, in full, 'Will you then giue your faithfull diligence alwayes, so to minister the doctrine and Sacraments, *and the discipline of Christ*,<sup>44</sup> as the Lord hath commanded, and as this Church hath received the same?'. The Westminster Confession, likewise, holds to the importance of discipline in the church. It does not speak of marks or notes as such, like the Church of England formularies, but clearly reflects the latter, and reflects Field's notes too in words such as, 'Unto this catholick visible church Christ hath given the ministry, oracles, and ordinances of God [. . .] as the doctrine of the gospel is taught and

<sup>40</sup> See, e.g., *Martin Bucer: Reforming Church and Community*, ed. by D.F. Wright (Cambridge, 1994).

<sup>41</sup> Original formulation in French by Guido de Brès in 1561, now not extant; revised editions in French (1580), Latin (1581, 1612, 1618-19) followed.

<sup>42</sup> Belgic Confession, modern translation as found in Philip Schaff, *The Creeds of Christendom* (Fourth Edition), III, 419-420. See also articles 27, 28 of the Belgic Confession. The Confession of the English Congregation at Geneva (1556 – seemingly the first formal statement of these three marks, including discipline), the French Confession of Faith (1559, articles 26-28); the Scottish Confession of Faith (1560, chapters 16, 18, following the continental lead), and the Second Helvetic Confession (1566, chapter 17), all reflect these three marks exactly.

<sup>43</sup> John Jewel (1522-1571, Oxford BD 1552, DD 1565, Bishop of Salisbury 1560), mentor to Richard Hooker, disciple, friend and associate of Peter Martyr, wrote (in Latin) his *Apology of the English Church*, 1562 (and its *Defence*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition 1570/71), the first formal statement defining and defending the position of the Church of England against Rome, and earlier in 1559 participated as a protestant disputant against the Romanists at the Westminster Conference held on the accession of Elizabeth I. This homily, from the second Book of Homilies of 1562, is attributed to Jewel, though authorship is not entirely certain. From 1565 Jewel entered into an interchange of tracts with the recusant Thomas Harding, replying to Harding's *Answer* of 1564 with his *Reply* of 1565, and to Harding's subsequent *Confutation* with his *Defence* in 1566-67.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 1559 Book of Common Prayer (1634 edition), italics mine.

embraced, ordinances administered'.<sup>45</sup> But discipline in the church is advocated in a chapter of the Westminster Confession (ch. XXX, 'Of Church Censures') devoted to the theme.

Interestingly, Hooker, like the Church of England formularies, does not, in his *Lawes*, deal with the marks or notes of the church in those terms at all. Where he does use the term 'mark' or 'note' it is to define the individual Christians who comprise the church, not the church itself as an entity. Thus (noting Ephesians 4:5): 'The unity of which visible body and Church of Christ consisteth in that uniformity which all several persons thereunto belonging have, by reason of that *one Lord* whose servants they all profess themselves, that *one Faith* which they all acknowledge, that *one Baptism* wherewith they are all initiated. [. . .] But we speak now of the visible Church, whose children are signed with this mark, "one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism." [. . .] If by external profession they be Christians, then they are of the visible Church of Christ [. . .]. [. . .] whosoever appertain to the visible body of the Church, they have also the notes of external profession, whereby the world knoweth what they are'.<sup>46</sup> Thus he follows the common distinction between the church visible and invisible, as further evidenced by such as: 'For lack of diligent observing the difference, first between the Church of God mystical and visible, then between the visible sound and corrupted, sometimes more, sometimes less, the oversights are neither few nor light that have been committed'.<sup>47</sup> However, although Hooker does not formulate notes of the church itself, as such, it is clear that he does hold Calvin's notes in just as high regard as being essential to a true church. Thus, concerning the importance of apostolic doctrine: 'We have from the Apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ received that brief confession of faith which hath been always a badge of the Church, a mark whereby to discern Christian men from Infidels and Jews. "This faith received from the Apostles and their disciples," saith Irenaeus, "the Church though dispersed throughout the world, doth notwithstanding keep as safe as if it dwelt within the walls of some one house, and as uniformly hold, as if it had but one only heart and soul; this as consonantly it preacheth, teacheth, and delivereth, as if but one tongue did speak for all. As one sun shineth to the whole world, so there is no faith but this one published, the brightness whereof must enlighten all that come to the knowledge of the truth"',<sup>48</sup> and likewise: 'sacraments are marks of distinction to separate God's own from strangers: so that in all these respects, they are found to be most necessary'.<sup>49</sup> Hooker quarrels with the contemporary

<sup>45</sup> Westminster Confession of Faith, XXV (*Of the Church*), §III, reflecting Field's three notes (3,1,2 in that order in the first clause, 1,3,2 in the second), as we shall see.

<sup>46</sup> *Lawes*, Book 3, Chapter 1, (I, §3,7,14, 338-352 of the Keble 7<sup>th</sup> edition, Oxford: 1888).

<sup>47</sup> *Lawes*, Book 3, Chapter 1, (*ibid.*, §9).

<sup>48</sup> *Lawes*, Book 5, Chapter 42, quoting Irenaeus, Book 1, ch. 3, (II, §1, 175 of the Keble 7<sup>th</sup> edition, Oxford: 1888).

<sup>49</sup> *Lawes*, Book 5, Chapter 57, (II, §2, 256 of the Keble 7<sup>th</sup> edition, Oxford: 1888).

disciplinarian approach, requiring discipline as a necessary property (i.e., note or mark) of the church, in Appendix II to *Ecclesiastical Polity*, Book V.<sup>50</sup>

## 7.6 – Field's 'Notes' of the Church

So as we have seen, the notion of defining a true church by means of its 'notes' or 'marks' is not new to Field. He follows a well-trodden path. However, Field does not content himself with Calvin's two marks alone but neither does he adopt the set of three notes more typical of some other Reformers, namely Doctrine/Scripture, Sacraments, and Discipline. That he eschews discipline as a separate note is perhaps not surprising, of course, given he does not favour a nonconformist, disciplinarian model (though we must not forget that the Church of England homily for Whitsun does include discipline).<sup>51</sup> Furthermore, Field's own third note does actually encompass discipline, though not stated specifically as such; we shall see shortly that the third note concerns the importance of the orders of ministry, and discipline is one remit of ordained ministers (but just one out of several important such ministerial functions). This is important – right discipline in the church is essential in Field's view, but he sees no need separately to state it in his notes. Rather, it is entailed by the third note that he himself advocates.

So we turn now to Field's conception of the 'notes' of the church. Field is a loyal (moderate) Calvinist in his doctrine, as were most Church of England divines of his age, and so his starting point for his own notes is Calvin. But as we shall see shortly he extends Calvin's two notes and adopts a set of three notes, but with the third note concerning ministry, not discipline as such.

Field is concerned 'to find out the notes whereby the true Church may be known and discerned from all other companies and societies of men in the world'.<sup>52</sup> Such notes, or characteristics, '(p)erpetually and absolutely [...] proper to a thing', must be 'inseparable and incommunicable'; that is, 'never being not found in that to which it is proper, nor ever being found in anything else'.<sup>53</sup> That is, an inseparable note *must* pertain to the entity in question, an incommunicable note must *not* pertain to anything else. By 'the true Church', Field means not the entire Christian Church most generally considered, namely the aggregate of all those professing the Christian faith which might be taken to include, for example, all schismatics who separate, for these are not part of the true church (as we

<sup>50</sup> *Lawes*, Book 5, Appendix II, (II, §4, 602ff of the Keble 7<sup>th</sup> edition, Oxford: 1888).

<sup>51</sup> And the question asked of the presbyteral ordinand by the bishop in the Ordinal in the Book of Common Prayer, 1559, partially quoted earlier, is, in full, 'Will you then give your faithfull diligence alwayes, so to minister the doctrine and Sacraments, *and the discipline of Christ*, as the Lord hath commanded, and as this Realme hath received the same, according to the Commandements of God, so that you may teach the people committed to your cure and charge, with al diligence to keepe and observe the same?' (1634 edition, italics mine)

<sup>52</sup> (2.1/1.61).

<sup>53</sup> (2.1/1.62).

shall see); and likewise Field would not include the current Church of Rome, either taken in its English national manifestation or in its worldwide 'universal' and 'catholic' entirety, despite its appropriation of those terms for itself alone, for this Church of Rome in its current Tridentine form is itself schismatic, having broken faith, in Field's view, with the corpus of true world churches (as we shall also see). Rather, one finds 'the true Catholic Church'<sup>54</sup> wherever one finds the notes of the church satisfied; they are definitive for a true church, not least because that understanding is inherent in the terms 'inseparable and incommunicable'. Ironically, but very importantly for Field, although the Tridentine Church of Rome is not a true church, the pre-Reformation Church of Rome certainly was a true church, a rather surprising observation at first sight. But as we shall see, despite much corruption, abuse and heresy within it, it nevertheless satisfied all three of Field's notes. Field often adds the qualifying adjective, 'true', and generally speaking he does this when he wishes to stress the identity of the true catholic church as opposed to the false or pretended – i.e. when he is seeking to demonstrate that his church, the Church of England, is the true church in England, in contradistinction to the current, Tridentine Church of Rome, which is not so, in his estimation. By 'catholic' Field does not of course mean the Church of Rome, but the catholic church properly considered according to his notes.<sup>55</sup> Certainly the Church of Rome held that it, and it alone of all world churches, was the true catholic church, but it is an essential contention of Field and his fellow protestants that Rome has absolutely no right to reserve the term for itself.

In brief summary, Field's notes are:

(1) right belief, (2) right sacraments, and (3) right ministry.

Together these comprise a necessary and sufficient (i.e., 'inseparable and incommunicable') set of demarcating marks. I proceed to analyse them now.

### 7.6.1 – The First Note of the Church

Field develops his notes progressively from the starting point of the 'profession of divine, supernatural and revealed verities'.<sup>56</sup> This phrase, without the qualifier, 'in Christ', would, Field argues in this chapter, be a single and sufficient note to distinguish the Christian Church from the company of pagans, but not from the Jews. The 'profession of divine verities revealed *in Christ*' would be a single, sufficient 'note' of the Christian Church, most generally considered, to distinguish it from the companies of both pagans and Jews. However, Field is developing a set of notes which will circumscribe the church conceived much more narrowly than this. The church 'generally

<sup>54</sup> (2.2/1.65).

<sup>55</sup> For Field's full understanding of the term 'catholic', see later.

<sup>56</sup> (2.2/1.64-5); likewise all other quotations in this section unless noted otherwise.



considered', as Field conceives it, comprises all professing Christians, including heretics and schismatics, as we have seen, so long as a heretic does profess at least some of the corpus of divine truth. The church thus generally considered is an important concept to Field, and he frequently works with this wide definition of the Christian Church (not least because ultimately he will conclude that the Church of Rome under the leadership of its erring guides does remain in some sense part of the Church of God most generally considered, though no more so than the various other heretics and schismatics); it is not a true church, for it does not satisfy the notes. The true<sup>57</sup> catholic church, however, as Field conceives it, excludes all heretics and schismatics; it is thus a much narrower conception of the church, and it is this that Field seeks to delineate by means of his notes.

Field proceeds to strengthen his first note of the church in order to exclude heretics. The 'profession of divine verities revealed in Christ', as it stands, would include heretics (for every heretic believes *some* of the corpus of divine truth). So Field excludes heretics by adding the word 'entire', now making the first note to be '(the) *entire* profession of the truth revealed in Christ',<sup>58</sup> more fully stated as 'the entire profession of divine verities, according to the rule of faith, left by Christ, and his first disciples and scholars, the holy apostles'. Answering various charges by Bellarmine, Field subsequently clarifies this 'profession' to mean a sincere and pure profession 'free from all damnable, fundamental and pertinacious error',<sup>59</sup> in order properly to exclude a church where the central core-truths of the Christian faith are universally denied. This note, now in its final form, and demarcating the society of all right-believing Christians, which Field calls 'the orthodox Church', excludes all heretics (because a heretical church, by definition, fails in some respect to hold to all Christian truth). Before we move on, it is worth noting Field's meticulous argumentation and careful, logical reasoning; this is, with the occasional exception, constant throughout his work, as is his careful arrangement of material.

At this point we can usefully observe that Field's first note of the church reflects Luther's first and 'chief' note, with its insistence on the profession of Christian truth. It can also be noted here, although Field himself does not explicitly make the point, that this first of Field's three notes, excluding as it does the heretics (according to a strict reading of Book 2, Chapter 2, where he develops these notes), would on its own be a sufficient note adequately to circumscribe 'the

<sup>57</sup> Field sometimes abbreviates 'the true church', or, equivalently, 'the true catholic church', or the 'catholic church', to the simple term, 'the church'. When Field writes of the church, it is always clear from context whether or not he is considering the church excluding heretics and schismatics (i.e. the catholic church, which is his most usual use of the term), or otherwise (in which case he usually uses a term such as 'the church (most) generally considered', if he wishes to include all professing Christians including heretics, or 'the orthodox church', if he wishes to include schismatics but exclude heretics).

<sup>58</sup> Italics mine, here and in paragraph above.

<sup>59</sup> (2.3/1.67).

multitude of right believing Christians (which is the sound part of the Christian Church, and is named the orthodox Church)', and we shall refer to this observation again shortly below.

The first note alone, however, does not exclude schismatics, who although they may be right-believing<sup>60</sup> (i.e., orthodox), are not catholic; as well as heretics, schismatics also are 'not fully and absolutely of the Church',<sup>61</sup> in Field's view, for anything which destroys the essential unity of the church cannot be of the true church. Unity must be defended at all costs, and so the 'notes' of the church must be extended so as to exclude schismatics, who have broken away from the true catholic church. Field achieves this, not by a further modification of this one 'note' of the church (the 'entire profession of the truth revealed in Christ'), but by extending the notes to more than one. At this point Field simply states his three notes. It is interesting that after an extended and typically meticulous argument developing his first note, he suddenly just states the next two. For the greatest part Field is always thorough and rigorous in his argumentation, but he seems to take it for granted without dispute that sacraments and ministry are part and parcel of the doctrine of the church; I shall comment further on this shortly. But first we return to Field's three notes of the church, (1) Christian doctrine, (2) the sacraments, and (3) order of ministry, which he concludes, 'do perpetually, and ever sever the true Church from all conventicles of erring and seduced miscreants'.<sup>62</sup>

A word of caution in reading Field is in order here. If we ask ourselves the question, "Is it possible for a true church to contain within it schismatics, heretics, feigned believers or notorious evil livers?", we might, on reading Field, sometimes think that his answer is "Yes", sometimes "No". We might think "Yes", given that for Field clearly no church, not even a true church, is perfectly pure – there will be those within in it who hold opinions outside the corpus of 'divine verities', for no-one's doctrinal understanding is perfect, and there is room for discussion in peripheral matters; further, no-one conducts themselves perfectly either. But we might think "No" given that in the formulation of these

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<sup>60</sup> But note, Field is aware that schismatics sometimes add heresy to their schism, the better to justify the latter: 'schismatics *may* and *sometimes do* hold an entire profession of the truth revealed in Christ' (2.2/l.65), italics mine, but correspondingly they *may not* and *sometimes do not*.

<sup>61</sup> (1.13/l.42).

<sup>62</sup> (2.2/l.65). Note also:

'The notes [...] that are inseparable, perpetual, and absolutely proper and peculiar, which perpetually distinguish the true Catholic Church from all other societies of men and professions of religions in the world, are three:

- *First*, the entire profession of those supernatural verities, which God hath revealed in Christ his Son:
- *Secondly*, the use of such holy ceremonies and sacraments as he hath instituted and appointed to serve as provocations to godliness, preservations from sin, memorials of the benefits of Christ, warrants for the greater security of our belief, and marks of distinction to separate his own from strangers:
- *Thirdly*, an union or connexion of men in this profession and use of these sacraments, under lawful pastors and guides, appointed, authorised, and sanctified, to direct and lead them in the happy ways of eternal salvation.

That these are notes of the Church, it will easily appear, by consideration of all those conditions that are required in the nature of notes. They are inseparable, they are proper, and they are essential, and such things as give being to the Church.' (2.2/l.65), italics, bulleting and formatting mine.

notes Field is careful to *exclude* schismatics and heretics. There is a clear resolution to this tension. First, a schismatic by definition has left the church of his own accord. And further, it is not individuals with whom Field is concerned, but schismatics who join together to form a pretend-church; hence his term 'conventicles'. Clear examples would be the Anabaptist community, and separatist congregations. They are not true churches, whatever their protestation of Christian-ness. Above all, taking note of Field's prime objective, the recusant communities cannot be deemed true churches, however much they organise themselves under 'English mission' secular priests. Secondly, an individual tending to hold doctrinal opinions contrary to the received norm is not a true heretic until their error is 'damnable, fundamental and pertinacious' – in which case, by appropriate administration of church discipline, they are excluded anyway if the error is that serious. Field is several times at pains to emphasise that less serious error (outside the non-negotiable central core), or non-pertinacious error held within an honest and open mind prepared to yield to persuasion, is certainly containable within the true church. As for 'feigned Christians', their presence is regrettable, but inevitable, given Field's belief in the 'visible church' (seen by mankind) as distinct from the invisible (as seen by God). As for notorious evil livers, again, appropriate administration of church discipline will exclude the worst, leaving a visible church of thoroughly imperfect, sinful people – a true church. Likewise, when we read Field making a statement (as he does) like 'a true church is free from all damnable error', he does not mean to imply that the entire multitude of believers comprising it are all individually totally free of erroneous thinking. He is speaking of the church as a whole – the church's professed doctrine viewed corporately is free from damnable error, notwithstanding misled individuals within it. But if a professed church as a whole holds damnable error within its belief system, then it is no true church – and such, to Field, is the Tridentine Church of Rome, it having ratified all its errors at Trent, whilst, perhaps, reforming some abuses. But not so in its entirety the pre-Reformation Church of Rome, because (as we shall see) every Reformation distinctive doctrine was held within the church by certain of its divines all throughout history.

We must keep in mind, here and in the following pages, that the first of these 'notes' is Field's fundamental, overriding concern, namely apostolic Christian truth; this will become apparent when we examine Field's response to the Romanist 'notes' of the church. But he finds it necessary to add the other two notes out of his concern for the preservation of this truth *in order and unity*. In other words, it is the sacraments of the church, and the provision of 'lawful pastors and guides' (as we shall see), which are the apostolic and divine means of ensuring that the church falls neither into heresy nor schism. The presbyterate<sup>63</sup> is the guardian and teacher of the truth. This is significant, for it gives us further indication of Field's determination to champion and uphold the unity of the church, a matter dear to his heart, which we shall in due course see to be of immense importance to his

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<sup>63</sup> Which for Field includes the episcopate – see later.

understanding of ministerial orders in general and of bishops in particular. Equally, though, we shall discover also that the unity Field quests for is not one which papers over the cracks of fundamental divisions in the church, especially where the 'faith once delivered' is concerned. It is a unity rooted in apostolic truth.

It is pertinent to observe that whereas Field carefully reasoned, giving succinctly rationalised arguments, each step in creating his first note of the church, he does not do exactly likewise for his second and third notes – he merely states them (see above), introduced simply by, 'It remaineth, therefore, that we seek out those things that are so peculiarly found in the companies of right believing and Catholic Christians, that they may serve as notes of difference to distinguish them from all, both Pagans, Jews,<sup>64</sup> heretics and schismatics'.<sup>65</sup> It will be profitable to enquire, therefore, as to exactly what role these latter notes play in circumscribing the catholic church; that is to say, by what manner are they necessary and sufficient to exclude the schismatics (given that the first note is necessary and sufficient to exclude all 'Pagans, Jews [and] heretics').

Further, it must be remembered that Field is following a recognised pattern of (up to) three notes, held by many of the Reformers in general. His distinctive feature (though not unique to him) is that he has three notes, but replaces *discipline* with *ministry*.<sup>66</sup> This is Field's third note, which is necessary to exclude the schismatics in Field's scheme; but first we cover his second, concerning the sacraments.

### 7.6.2 – The Second Note of the Church

It must be remembered that Field's concept of the notes is that they serve to define and delineate the true catholic church (as, indeed, is the case with the Reformers generally), and not simply to describe it, so although the sacraments are very important in Field's estimation, that in itself does not amount to a rationale for including Note 2. It is needful to ask, then, what purpose is served by the second note. On the face of it, it initially seems that Field adds the second and third notes together in order to exclude the schismatics. But I have shown above that the third note, alone, serves this purpose. In the course of his entire work Field substantiates this clearly and adequately. But nowhere, so far as I can see, does Field offer a parallel rationale for the second note. It is intriguing therefore that Field simply inserts his second note into his list without any explanation, either there,

<sup>64</sup> Modern sensitivities may raise a question mark, of course, over the propriety of terminology usage that could possibly be construed as anti-Semitic. But this study does not address the question as to possible anti-Semitism in Field's era or any other (though this may be a worthy exercise), and for us to defer to this matter in this study would be an anachronistic distraction.

<sup>65</sup> (2.2/1.65).

<sup>66</sup> We showed above that Luther specified both separately.

or subsequently – it certainly seems to serve no explicit purpose in his scheme for delineating the true catholic church; and indeed, Field acknowledges the validity of the sacraments as practised by schismatics, and not only by them, but by heretics also, and as practised by unworthy ministers; this being in line with the teaching of Augustine, expressed in his treatment of the Donatism controversy.

Regarding the second note, concerning the sacraments, he does not anywhere in 2,000 pages argue for their necessity, unusually for him – he usually argues every point cogently and meticulously – although he does, in due course, argue for a right doctrine of the sacraments (not surprisingly, considering the variance between the Church of England's understanding of them, as he sees it, and the Church of Rome's). I would consider there is a satisfactory reason for this: Field's overriding concern is, as we have noted, to counter the accusations of the Church of Rome against the Church of England. But there is no dispute with the Church of Rome over the *necessity* of the sacraments, just as there is no need to argue against Rome for a trinitarian understanding of the Godhead; neither, of course, is there any dispute regarding the *necessity* of ministry – the issue is with the precise doctrine of those entities, and it proves to be the doctrine of the ordained ministry in general, and of bishops in particular, that Field argues at greatest length. Field certainly does address the doctrine of the sacraments, not only to show the error of Rome's sacramental beliefs, but also to seek to compose the differences within protestantism. But this is outside the scope of this study.

### 7.6.3 – The Third Note of the Church

Respecting the third note, its necessity as a note to exclude schismatics becomes immediately and abundantly clear, as we shall see further in a separate chapter devoted to the ordained ministry. In summary here, the nature of schism is to break away from the lawful order and unity of the church, and so schismatics by the nature of their schism have separated themselves from the 'orderly connexion' of all right believing, catholic Christians. The ordained ministry of the catholic church not only preserves and propagates the apostolic truth, as noted above, but it also preserves the 'orderly connexion' – indeed, 'the coherence and connexion of the pastors and bishops amongst themselves'<sup>67</sup> is important to Field, no less than 'the flocks depending on them'<sup>68</sup> and obeying them ('order of ministry, and due obedience yielded thereunto').<sup>69</sup> It is clearly Field's third note, therefore, which (necessarily and sufficiently) excludes schismatics, and thus, with the first note, delineates the true catholic church.

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<sup>67</sup> (2.7/1.86).

<sup>68</sup> (3.41/1.330).

<sup>69</sup> (1.10/1.31).

Neither are sincere profession and right use of sacraments so essential to believing and catholic men, that they do sufficiently distinguish them from schismatics, unless this be added, that they "hold the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace:"<sup>[70]</sup> so that [...] they do not sufficiently distinguish the whole body of the Church from the conventicles of schismatics, unless an orderly union or connexion of men concurring in them be added, which orderly union or connexion is essential to the Church as a collected multitude.<sup>71</sup>

The essence of the unity of the church is that, in Field's view, it is a connectional church, and the 'orderly connexion' is maintained by the church's (ordained) ministry – we shall examine this in detail in the later chapter devoted to Field's understanding of ministerial orders and bishops.

One could acknowledge that sometimes Field writes of the 'right and due use of sacraments', meaning the sacraments properly understood and administered by 'lawful pastors and guides' (as per the essential Note 3), and which thus does not in that sense include sacraments as administered by heretics and schismatics; but it is nonetheless the case that Field still does not absolutely need Note 2 in his scheme. Note 3 is sufficient on its own to exclude the heretics and schismatics from the catholic church as delineated by the notes. However important Field considers the sacraments to be in the church, he does not (on his terms) need to state their necessity as a 'note distinctive' – not least also because they are part of the sum of doctrine that makes the rule of faith.

Additionally, it is to be observed that Field on numerous occasions treats 'word and sacraments' (i.e., in essence, Notes 1 and 2) as belonging together, and Note 3 as being in addition to them (rather than seeing Notes 2 and 3 together as being in addition to Note 1, even though the latter is how he developed his theory in the course of his analysis). This is clear, for example, in the quotation 'Neither are sincere profession [...] referred to above.'<sup>72</sup>

In these quotations, the sacraments are already assumed, logically prior to the matter of excluding the schismatics, as also when Field observes, 'who is so foolish as to deny, that the profession of truth, and right use of sacraments, are essential to the whole body of the Church?'.<sup>73</sup> To these observations we may note also Field's consideration of ministerial orders (see later chapter) where on several occasions he describes the lawful pastors of the church as having 'the ministry of the word and sacraments', or as 'preaching, teaching, ministering sacraments, and governing also'.<sup>74</sup> Likewise,

<sup>70</sup> Quoting Ephesians 4:3.

<sup>71</sup> (2.4/i.75-76).

<sup>72</sup> (2.4/i.75-76). See also: 'We say, that there is nothing, besides sincerity of profession [note 1] and right use of Sacraments [note 2], essential to the Church as a collected multitude, but only order and orderly connexion, or union of men concurring in these; while some authorised thereunto do teach, direct, and command, others obey' (2.4/i.75), and: 'nothing else but an orderly multitude of right believers, [...] collected and gathered in the true faith of Christ, and hope of eternal happiness; which [...] cannot be known and discerned from the conventicles of schismatics, by right faith and due use of Sacraments only, without the addition of orderly connexion' (2.4/i.76).

<sup>73</sup> (2.4/i.75).

<sup>74</sup> (5.26/iii.201).

Field makes the ministry of the church follow on from 'word and sacraments' in giving his approval to the papists' conception of the unity of the church as being 'first, in respect of the rule of faith and use of the sacraments of salvation; secondly, in respect of the coherence and connexion of the pastors and bishops amongst themselves; thirdly, in due and submissive obedience of the people to their pastors'.<sup>75</sup>

We have noted, therefore, that Field's Notes 1 and 2 seem to belong as a pair (as with Calvin), with the third following in addition to them; i.e., it seems not that 2 and 3 have been added to 1 (in order to exclude schismatics), but rather that 3 has been added to 1 and 2 for this purpose, thus implying that in Field's development of his notes Note 2 pertains independently of the need to exclude the schismatics. It has appeared in Field's analysis with no explanation. There are clues though, that indicate something of the importance Field assigns to the sacraments alongside the corpus of revealed truth. Field is not only a child of his time, when all his contemporaries and predecessors, in all Reformed professions, as a matter of course held a view of word and sacraments together as absolutely central to the life of the church,<sup>76</sup> so that the sacraments are an *a priori* 'given' for the church. It must also be remembered that the overriding purpose of Field's entire work is to legitimise his own church over and against that of Rome. In thus doing he takes great pains to show how his own church is in line with 'the faith once delivered to the saints' by Christ and his apostles. Correspondingly, he shows in enormous and intricate detail (and this forms the vast bulk of his entire work) how the Church of Rome has deviated from this original profession both in word and sacraments. In respect of the latter, whilst the matter of the sacraments of the church occupy in total a relatively small part of Field's writings, where Field does give some attention to the subject of the second note, the sacraments, it is more often than not with respect to Field's estimation of the practical abuses of the sacraments by the Tridentine Roman church (such as the carrying around of the host), and/or of the corrupt papist doctrine of the mass (such as their conception of the sacrifice of the mass) – thus he expresses his concern to know 'truth from error, *and* the right use of Sacraments from the profanation of them'.<sup>77</sup>

Additionally, it would not be unreasonable to suggest that Field's own theology of the church is significantly influenced by Calvin with his own two notes of the church – word and sacraments, and it would be unusual of Field to do otherwise. His starting point is not that of Luther and Beza with their single note, and it is not that of the three notes, including discipline, of the more radical Reformers. To which must be added that Field is a typical (i.e., high Calvinist) Church of England divine and we

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<sup>75</sup> (2.7/i.86).

<sup>76</sup> Compare, for example, Hooker on the necessity of the sacraments: *Lawes*, book 5, ch. 57.

<sup>77</sup> (2.4/i.78), italics mine.

have noted above the Church of England's dual emphasis on word and sacrament. Nonetheless it remains the case that nowhere does Field seem to *argue* for the inclusion of the sacraments as a 'note distinctive', even when qualified as '*right and due use of the sacraments*' (italics mine). On Field's own terms, whereby he requires a note to be 'proper' and 'peculiar' to the thing marked out, so that the note cannot be done without, the second note is not, strictly speaking, necessary – for the doctrine of the sacraments is itself derivative from the corpus of revealed truth: that is to say, wherever Field rationalises his conception of the sacraments, it is by appeal to scripture and the early church Fathers. However, it is with Field's conception of the notes of the church that we must work, which he repeats constantly in one form or another.<sup>78</sup>

These 'notes' (*Christian truth, sacraments, ministry*) 'are inseparable, they are proper, and they are essential, and such things as give being to the Church'.<sup>79</sup>

### 7.7 – Field's response to the Romanists' notes

The notion of 'notes', or distinguishing marks, of the church is not original to Field, of course, as we have stated already. Field does not set his three 'notes' against the alternative three notes typical of the nonconformists, where they frequently included discipline as a third note; it is Hooker who answers them,<sup>80</sup> arguing for the validity of bishops, for example, against the separatist tendencies of his puritan opponents. But Field's opponents are the Romanists. He sets his three notes, therefore, against those traditionally proposed by his papist adversaries (as Field conceives it), of which the principal five are, as he states them, 'Antiquity, Succession, Unity, Universality, and the very name and title of Catholic, expressing the Universality'.<sup>81</sup> There is a conundrum here. Bellarmine, the Counter-Reformation controversialist, of renown in the Roman church, is one of Field's two principal stated antagonists. Bellarmine, as is well known, and as is typical of Romanists (and many dissenters too, for that matter), acknowledged the traditional four marks (One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic) of the church. But in developing his arguments against the protestants in the late sixteenth century, and

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<sup>78</sup> Such as his summary of them as:

1. 'the entire profession of revealed truth, according to the rule of faith left by Christ, and
2. the right and due use of sacraments,
3. under lawful pastors and guides appointed to conduct the sons of God, in the ways of their eternal bliss and happiness' (2.4/i.77), numbering and formatting mine.

<sup>79</sup> (2.2/i.65).

<sup>80</sup> *Lawes*, book 5, ch. 76ff.

<sup>81</sup> (2.5/i.78). Field does not make a comparison or contrast between either his scheme of three notes, or his opponents' scheme of five major notes, and the prior scheme of the Fathers, enshrined in the clause, 'One Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church.' Nor does he explicitly make a contrast with the Puritans' note on discipline, which essentially replaces Field's third note.



in writing his *Disputationes*,<sup>82</sup> he used these four Niceno-Constantinopolitan marks as the basis for developing an extended set of no fewer than 15. The full set of Bellarmine's notes is as follows:

- Catholicity – the Church's name, Catholic, universal, and worldwide, and not confined to any particular nation or people.
- Antiquity – in tracing her ancestry directly to Jesus Christ.
- Long Duration – constant duration in lasting substantially unchanged for so many centuries.
- The Multitude of Believers – Extensiveness in the number of her loyal members.
- Apostolic Succession of Bishops – from the first apostles at the Last Supper to the present hierarchy.
- Agreement with the Ancient Church – of her doctrine.
- The Unity of the Church – union of her members among themselves and with their visible head the Roman Pontiff.
- Holiness of Doctrine – in reflecting the sanctity of God.
- Efficacy of Doctrine – in its power to sanctify believers and inspire them to great moral achievement.
- Holiness of the Fathers of Religion – of the Church's representative writers and defenders.
- The Glory of Miracles – worked in the Church and under the Church's auspices.
- The Light of Prophecy – the gift of prophecy found among the Church's saints and spokesmen.
- Confession of our Adversaries – opposition that the Church arouses among those who attack her on the very grounds that Christ was opposed by his enemies.
- The Unhappy End – of those who oppose the Church.
- The Temporal Happiness – of those who defend the Church.

Field does pay some minor attention to some of these others, but he seems to consider the five that he nominates, and which we are considering here, as encapsulating the essence of the Romanist notes which require concerted refutation. These five do not quite equate to any set of five of Bellarmine's. Catholicity, the fifth Romanist note as quoted by Field, is Bellarmine's first, but this, in his (Bellarmine's) treatment of it, includes catholic as a 'name', and also includes the notion of world-wide universality. But Field treats universality and the 'name' catholic as two separate notes. Field appears to have concentrated on four of Bellarmine's notes (Antiquity, Succession, Unity, Universality), but has divided Universality into two, treating Catholicity separately. Field does not actually respond to the Romanists' justification of their own notes, although he has earlier addressed the responses of both Bellarmine and Stapleton to the protestant formulation of the notes of the church. True, Field is not responding to Bellarmine and Stapleton only, but to the Romanist position generally. But with Bellarmine being such a key spokesperson for the Romanist camp, and having published his *Disputationes*, clearly delineating his own notes (all 15), one wonders why Field did not make his response specific to what Bellarmine had actually formulated. Field clearly divides Bellarmine's 'Catholicity' into two, namely 'Universality' and 'the name and title of Catholic',<sup>83</sup> because he sees this, the first of Bellarmine's notes, as encompassing two separate and individually

<sup>82</sup> *Disputationes de controversiis Christianae fidei adversus hujus temporis hereticos* (in Latin, 1586-89, 'Discussions on the controversies of the Christian faith against the heretics of this time'), and in particular the section *De Conciliis et Ecclesiis* ('On councils and churches'), and even more particularly the sub-section *De notis ecclesiae* ('On the notes or marks of the church'). This latter smaller portion has been translated into English: Robert Bellarmine, *On the Marks of the Church*, tr. by Ryan Grant (Mediatrix Press, 2015).

<sup>83</sup> (2.9/1.89).

important errors. Further, Field could perhaps be criticised for not engaging at all with the concept of a 'holy' church, either in his treatment of his own notes, or in his countering Bellarmine's, despite this having been much discussed before and in his time, and despite it being a core component of the 'four' *notae ecclesiae*. The development of the notes of the church within the Church of Rome over the centuries was long and involved, of course – the notes were hardly a fixed set pertaining constantly through the era of the early church and the Medieval period. But further examination of this is beyond the remit of this study, as we concentrate on Field's reaction to what Romanist spokespersons were saying in his day.

Field's opponents, in particular Bellarmine and Stapleton, have employed their notes, as they have understood them, in justifying their contention that the Church of England is no church at all; i.e., the Church of England satisfies none of their five notes (as Field specifies them to be), in their estimation. These five papist 'notes' have, of course, a ring of familiarity about them in that they more or less reflect the ancient formula, 'One Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church'. Field does not intend to allow the Church of Rome to own and reserve this variation on the traditional formulation to itself – not alone, not at all. These five 'notes', or more exactly Field's reasons for denying their validity as 'notes' as understood by his adversaries, and Field's own reinterpretation of them, will be of crucial interest to us, bearing as they do upon our study, and we shall see that Field claims them, properly understood, for the Church of England and denies them to the papist faction of the Church of Rome. In particular, we shall observe that Field's understanding, and the Romanist understanding, reflect two fundamentally different conceptions of the church; one conception, Rome's, based on what is outward and visible and locatable, relying on performance and traditions, the other, Field's, representing as he sees it the protestants' view, based on the doctrine of the original apostles, originally handed on to the churches they founded – the one locating supreme authority in the current church (of Rome), whether in the pope or in councils, the other locating supreme authority in Christ and in scripture; the one seeing the role of pope or council as ruling and subjecting, the other seeing ministers as serving and teaching; the one generally equating the apostolic church and the worldwide catholic church (and thus the universal church) with the Church of Rome, the other seeing any world church as apostolic which continued in the apostles' faith, and identifying the church universal with the invisible church of the elect (as we have seen). It is my own view that in this Field reflects, whether consciously mindful of this faction or not, the opinion of Hus and the Hussites in denying Rome the right to keep Christendom in subjection.<sup>84</sup> Pelikan quotes Nicholas of Cusa as saying of the Hussites he is opposing, 'you say that first of all one must obey the commandment of Christ, and only then that of the church'.

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<sup>84</sup> Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition*, IV, ch. 2, 125, quoting Nicholas of Cusa's second epistle.

We shall refer again later to the entirely different conceptions of what the church is, but now we examine these five Romanist notes, as Field understands them, and Field's response to them, in order to show that a right understanding of Christian *doctrine* is at the heart of Field's concern. Field gives essentially the same response to all of them, as we shall see; apostolic Christian doctrine is the real substance underlying a valid conception of any of these notes.

### 7.7.1 – Antiquity

*Antiquity*, the first of the papists' 'notes' of the church, as nominated by Field, is understood by them (he says) to be the visibly unbroken physical line of continuance of the church back to the apostles. There has been no manifest break in the Church of Rome, either demographically or in time; there has been no schism or separation within Rome's ranks, whereas the Church of England represents a clear visible break. On this basis, the papists argue, the Church of Rome is the true church, because it is the church of antiquity, as opposed to the newly created Church of England, which is not of antiquity and therefore not a true church, and indeed no church at all. But antiquity, in Field's view, is only valid as a 'note' of the church if 'it (that church) have anciently, and ever holden the doctrine of truth'.<sup>85</sup> Newly founded churches can be (and in the past must be regarded as having been) true churches of antiquity, provided 'they have the faith first delivered to the saints'.<sup>86</sup>

Thus this very 'note' which the Romanists use to justify their assertion that the Church of Rome is the authentic true church of antiquity, Field, changing the premises of the argument, turns against them to show the very reverse – on the grounds that the Church of Rome has departed from true doctrine despite its unbroken line of physical continuance (and so is not at all a church of antiquity); whereas his own church holds to the apostolic doctrine (and so *is* a church of antiquity, despite its youth). There can be 'no plea of antiquity on behalf of any Churches whatsoever, though established by the apostles, unless they can prove that they have not left their first faith'.<sup>87</sup> Essentially, then, Field argues that Rome's definition of antiquity is invalid; physical antiquity is replaced by doctrinal antiquity in Field's scheme. The word 'apostolic' in the Nicene Creed means, according to Field, apostolic (and thus ancient) in doctrine. Both Field and Rome are clearly seeing 'antiquity' as being

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<sup>85</sup> (2.5/1.81).

<sup>86</sup> (2.5/1.80, quoting Jude 3 again). '[I]f any Church founded by the apostles, or their coadjutors, and left by them in the true profession, [...] can demonstrate that they have not since departed from their first and original estate, they thereby do prove themselves to be the true Churches of God. And if any other that began since, as innumerable did, can shew that they have the faith first delivered to the saints, they thereby prove themselves no less to be the true Church of God than the former, which had their beginning from the apostles themselves, and have continued in a state of Christianity ever since. Do we not see then, that it is truth of doctrine, whereby the Church is to be found out [...]?' (2.5/1.80).

<sup>87</sup> (2.5/1.81).

essentially equivalent to the Nicene 'apostolic'.<sup>88</sup> But for Rome, the apostolicity of the church entailed apostolic obedience, meaning obedience to the pope or to councils; whereas for Field, reflecting the view of Hus, apostolic obedience means a church or a Christian conforming to the apostolic faith. Pelikan writes, 'To Hus, as to Wycliffe, [...] "apostolic obedience" meant obedience to the word of the apostles in Scripture, not to the command of their successors in office'. Field, as we have seen, does think that ministers of the church should be obeyed, but only because they themselves are in accordance with the apostolic faith, and insofar as their exercising of discipline is in accordance with its, not their, requirements. So Pelikan continues, still describing Hus' view, 'the true successors of the apostles were those who faithfully preached the word of God'.<sup>89</sup>

So we see that *Antiquity*, properly considered, is, in Field's view, *antiquity of apostolic Christian truth*, and no other. Thus we continue to see, and Field is incessant in this insistence, that the predominant concern of Field is Christian doctrine, according to the 'rule of faith' left by Christ and the apostles.

### 7.7.2 – Succession

*Succession*, as a 'note' of the church, is understood by the 'papists', as Field relates it, to be the existence of an unbroken line of bishops stretching back to the apostles, a vehicle for physically transmitting the antiquity of the apostolic church down through the ages to the present day, by bishops consecrating bishops, by 'imposition of hands' (Field's expression),<sup>90</sup> in endless succession.<sup>91</sup> Clearly, succession is a corollary of antiquity in the Roman scheme. Needless to say, Field examines 'the allegation of the papists, endeavouring to prove against us, that we have not the true Church amongst us, because (as they falsely suppose) we lack the visible succession of pastors and bishops'.<sup>92</sup>

Field notes Calvin's view that this Romanist argument fails, because 'more is required to find out the true Church than personal succession; and that the Fathers did not demonstrate the Church barely by personal succession, but by shewing that they that succeeded held the faith of those that went before them'. For succession rightly considered is 'not bare succession, but [...] lawful succession, when not only the later succeed into the void rooms of those that went before them, being lawfully

<sup>88</sup> See Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition*, IV, 110-126 for an assessment of how Romanism in various ways defined and construed apostolicity.

<sup>89</sup> Pelikan, *ibid.*, IV, 111.

<sup>90</sup> E.g., see (2.7/l.86).

<sup>91</sup> For (the Romanists allege) '(n)o bishop may be esteemed and taken as lawfully ordained, unless he be ordained of three bishops at the least; and they, such as have been ordained in like sort; and so ascending till we come to the first' (3.39/l.317).

<sup>92</sup> (3.40/l.327).

called thereunto, but also hold the faith their predecessors did'.<sup>93</sup> For Field, therefore, succession can only be noted of a true church if it is succession of apostolic doctrine. A succession of ministry, and of bishops in particular, is still important to Field, though for the different reason of good order in the church, as we shall see in the next chapter.

So we see that as with *Antiquity*, so *Succession* also, properly considered, is *succession of apostolic Christian truth*. We shall now demonstrate briefly that again, doctrine is the predominant issue for the other three notes Field is reacting against.

### 7.7.3 – Unity

*Unity* is the papists'<sup>94</sup> third 'note' of the church, as Field lists them. They argue, he says, that the Church of England has broken unity in its separation from Rome; it is a schismatic church, and therefore not a true church. Field is, as we have seen, keen to uphold unity, but it must be unity properly considered; for he argues that unity consists<sup>95</sup> in (1) observing the rule of faith, (2) the spiritual coherence and connection of all pastors and bishops, and (3) the submission of the people to their pastors. We shall see shortly that it is the fundamental truth of apostolic Christian doctrine which 'coheres' the 'connexion' of ministers in unity, and by their teaching, the whole church. The requirement that the people should submissively obey the pastors is not infrequently mentioned by Field, and several examples occur in the quotations cited in this study. It is a prime role of the pastors to preserve unity by, amongst other things, their faithful propagation of the apostolic doctrine. Furthermore, the preservation of unity in the church entails a disciplinary as well as a directional aspect to the pastors' role to 'govern' the church. We have already noted that the church is 'that happy mother [. . .] to whose censures we must submit' – to which can be added an immediately preceding reference asserting divine testimony as to the 'Church, to whose authority and direction

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<sup>93</sup> (3.40/l.328).

<sup>94</sup> See Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition*, IV, 72-85, for a comprehensive assessment of how 'unity' was construed by Rome in the centuries prior to the Reformation, particularly in the light of the Rome-Avignon schism.

<sup>95</sup> 'The unity of the Church consisteth principally in three things:

1. in observing and holding the rule of faith once delivered to the saints [quoting Jude 3];
2. in the due connexion of many pastors, and the flocks depending on them, among themselves;
3. in the subjection of the people to their pastors' (3.41/l.330), numbering and formatting mine.

Or again, unity consists:

1. 'in respect of the rule of faith and use of the sacraments of salvation' (2.7/l.86); and
2. 'in respect of the coherence and connexion of the pastors and bishops amongst themselves' (2.7/l.86); or 'in respect of the same head, Christ, and guides appointed by him, [. . .] all holden in a sweet coherence and connexion amongst themselves, as if there were but one episcopal chair and office in the world; which unity of pastors and bishops, though they be many and joined in equal commission, without dependence from one another, Christ signified, by directing His words especially to Peter: "Feed my sheep, feed my lambs"' (2.7/l.85, quoting John 21:15-17); and
3. 'in due and submissive obedience of the people to their pastors' (2.7/l.86).

the Lord commandeth us to submit ourselves'<sup>96</sup> – and that Field's third 'note' of the church is 'order of ministry, and due obedience yielded thereunto'.<sup>97</sup> Later we shall note that the bishop is a 'judge in Christ's stead' (quoting Cyprian),<sup>98</sup> and we shall note the 'power of the Church in ordering offenders', or 'in the ordering of sinners'.<sup>99</sup> The second and third of these three aspects of 'unity' will occupy us in the next chapter, but regarding the first, it is clear again that Field only counts unity as denoting a true church if it is a unity founded on apostolic doctrine. Thus he gives the same rejoinder to the Romanists as he does for antiquity and succession.

#### 7.7.4 – Universality

*Universality* is the fourth of the papists' 'notes', as Field relates them. The Church of Rome maintains, observes Field, that it itself is the church universal, and is thus the true church – it is not confined to any one specific people or nation;<sup>100</sup> but the English Church<sup>101</sup> is certainly not universal in their view – it is restricted to one nation and some colonies: therefore it is not a true church. But in Field's view, universality 'is nowhere found, but in that blessed number of Christians that have been, are, and shall be'; and it 'is not found in any one Church, limited either in respect of time or place'.<sup>102</sup> As we note elsewhere, Field reacts against Rome's unilateral condemnation of all other world churches, each of which, including, now, the Church of England, has, on Rome's view, separated itself by schism and thus disbarred itself from membership of the universal church (i.e., Rome – there is a circular argument here in Rome's reasoning which Field is clearly conscious of). Again, without giving consideration to the long, involved debates about this and the other notes down through the centuries, he gives the same answer: 'universality may be a note of the true Church [...] by proving that it holdeth the common faith once delivered to the saints'.<sup>103</sup> The Church of England can so prove, so it is part of the universal church unlike the Church of Rome which has certainly departed from that ancient faith.

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<sup>96</sup> (1.11/i.38).

<sup>97</sup> (1.10/i.31).

<sup>98</sup> (5.27/iii.212).

<sup>99</sup> (1.16/i.51-2).

<sup>100</sup> It should be noted, though, that Field himself does not actually explain how Rome conceives this note (or the others), and it could be suggested that the Church of Rome fails to satisfy its own criterion in that it is confined to Western Europe by its own condemnation of the East.

<sup>101</sup> It would be technically anachronistic, though perhaps not improper, to call it the Anglican Church at this stage, that term originating in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>102</sup> Or more fully, 'universality may be a note of the true Church in respect of particular societies of Christians, limited in time and place; though not by having it, yet by demonstrating themselves to pertain to the unity of that Church that hath it. This no particular Church can do, but by proving that it holdeth the common faith once delivered to the saints, without heretical innovation, or schismatical violation of the unity and peace of the Christian world' (3.43/i.349).

<sup>103</sup> (3.43/i.349).

### 7.7.5 – Catholicity

*Catholicity* (by which fifth 'note' the papists do not in Field's judgement mean *universality* again, but rather the actual calling of a church by the name catholic) cannot possibly be a 'note' of the church now, according to Field, in the sense that the papists now conceive the term.<sup>104</sup> This may have been the case once long ago, but 'howsoever it was in the days of the fathers, it is not now proper to the true Church, but common to schismatics and heretics; and therefore [...] it cannot now serve as a mark or note distinctive, whereby the true Church may be known from misbelievers'.<sup>105</sup>

That is, there are heretical and schismatic 'churches' which count themselves 'catholic', including the Church of Rome, at least in its papist faction – in other words, the church has for centuries been a divided church, the split between East and West, and the corruption of Rome, being prominent cases in point. So the mere naming of a church, or a Christian, as catholic, in Field's day (or any other), is absolutely no guarantee of authentic, apostolic Christian faith. To claim *appropriately*, therefore, that a church is truly catholic needs more than that the word 'catholic' appears in its title, or that claims are made for catholicity; that is, to claim that a church is a *true* catholic church, that church must show that it holds the 'common faith' of the ancients. 'This being the way for particular Churches to demonstrate themselves to be catholic, by proving they hold the catholic faith, it is easy from hence to conclude, that the Reformed Churches are the Catholic Churches of God'.<sup>106</sup>

Likewise, for one church to declare of another that it, the other, is not catholic, the first church must demonstrate that the other does not, or does not now, hold to that ancient faith – but the Church of Rome can do no such thing in reference to the Church of England. Far from acknowledging that the Church of England has broken from the catholic church, then justifying this state of affairs, Field declares that the Church of England *is* a catholic church – by its break from Rome it has brought itself back into line with the historic, apostolic Christian Church, from which the Church of Rome broke fellowship many years since. It is the Church of Rome that is schismatic, and heretical, and thus not by any means a true church, and has been so for many centuries, at least in respect of its prevailing faction, the papist faction.

<sup>104</sup> 'The title of Catholic doth most fitly express those, both Christian men and societies of Christians which hold the common faith without particular divisions from the main body of Christianity. While, therefore, there was but the main body of Christianity at unity within itself and such portions of seduced and misled people as apparently divided themselves from it, the name of a Catholic was a note and distinctive mark or character to know and discern a Catholic from an heretic, or schismatic' (2.9/1.89).

<sup>105</sup> (2.9/1.89).

<sup>106</sup> (3.43/1.349).

Field thus gives exactly the same answer as before. As with *Antiquity, Succession, Unity* and *Universality*, so *Catholicity* also, properly considered, is *catholicity of apostolic Christian truth*, and no other, in Field's view. What we see, as stated earlier, is two fundamentally different views on the church. Rome has a view which focuses on what Field considers outward, visible aspects which are, in Field's judgment, unimportant, being dependent upon mankind and physical qualities. Field by contrast holds to a view of the church which is anchored not in outward lineage, etc., but in a truth system established in the apostolic era. We may usefully note also that the Roman church and Field's protestant church also held very different conceptions of truth – for the protestant church (as for Hus) truth is a once-for-all given, handed to the church by the apostles, whereas Rome had a more fluid view of truth which may have commenced with the apostles, but which encompassed as well much development within the doctrinal tradition.

### 7.8 – The 'faith once delivered'

Thus Field is clear in his own mind that the essence of heresy, and correspondingly of schism, is not that the heretic necessarily dissents from the teaching of his contemporary church (which could be heretical itself), but rather from the teaching of the apostles; nor that the schismatic separates himself from the fellowship of his church (which could, hypothetically, be a schismatic church itself), but rather from the fellowship of the apostles. He enshrines this in his first note of the church; 'the entire profession of those supernatural verities, which God hath revealed in Christ his Son'. This is a very important aspect of Field's work, and I think needs to be observed and stressed; i.e., the bedrock of the Christian Church is, for Field, the faith 'once delivered to the saints' (Jude 3), and it is perhaps instructive to note that Field's one published sermon is on this very verse, preached before King James I.<sup>107</sup>

We note, then, that for Field the Church of England is a fully, not a partially, Reformed church, and that he sees the Reformation as essentially a doctrinal one (i.e. a return to the apostolic Christianity of the Fathers, of the three creeds, of the general councils, etc.) rather than as essentially a reformation of morality, ceremonies or government. Field is forever referring to the rule of faith = the apostolic doctrine of Christ = scripture = 'the faith once delivered to the saints' of Jude 3, encapsulated in the received creeds. All the churches of the world, excepting the Tridentine Church of Rome, are in communion with one another despite the fact that they have separated over issues of church order and/or over minor doctrinal matters – they are all orthodox churches in Field's view

<sup>107</sup> As noted above in Ch. 5, this is the only other work by Field that was ever published, apart from a few notes on predestination, and a brief, unfinished preface to the putative further work that he was apparently writing, but was not finished (if ever properly started), at the time of his death. This matter is extant, and can be found included in Field's son Nathaniel's short biography of his father, *Memorials* – see Ch. 2 above.



for the very reason that their orthodoxy is that of the apostolic 'rule of faith' (a term much used by Field), propagated and circumscribed by the creeds and general councils. In other words, the true catholic church, defined by Field's three notes around the central doctrinal pivot of 'the faith once delivered to the saints', embraces all the Reformed churches, just as it embraces (as we have seen) the Eastern churches including the Greek Church and others.<sup>108</sup>

Our conclusion is clear. In Field's judgement, the five Romanist 'notes' analysed by Field could indeed be regarded as notes of a true church, so long as they are conceived in terms of faithfulness to apostolic doctrine. But consequent upon Field's intricate and thorough argumentation, it is the Church of England that satisfies these five notes (and is thus a true church); whilst the Church of Rome does not satisfy them at all (and is thus *not* a true church). The Church of Rome (represented by its prevailing papist faction) charges the Church of England with being both heretical (in its moderate Calvinist doctrine) and schismatical (in departing from the authorised headship of the Pope); only the Church of Rome on this charge is the true church. Field turns this on its head. It is the Church of England that has remained true to the apostolic succession of Christian doctrine, and is thus the true church in England; and it is the Church of Rome that has long since departed from true doctrine, and is thus a schismatical church. Field explicitly states that it is not certain exactly when the Church of Rome started erring; he is clear, though, that it commenced early, but progressed in its error gradually, by degrees, over the ensuing centuries.

The question might be asked at this point, if these five notes as Field relates them do adequately serve, properly considered, as notes, why did Field produce his own set of three, especially given that the Church of England formularies did not (and do not) specifically refer to notes of the church, nor Hooker likewise? To which question we can only speculate; but it would not be unreasonable to suppose that (a) the five notes do not specifically refer to right doctrine, and Field wishes to enshrine right doctrinal understanding in order to avoid any confusion with the Romanists' wrong understanding of their five notes; and (b) to use the five notes would invite confusion in the minds of those who understand the five notes only as Rome has portrayed them; and (c) Field's starting point is Calvin, as we have seen.

<sup>108</sup> '[T]he Greek Church, the Nestorian or Assyrian Churches, and the Churches of the supposed Monophysites, as the Jacobites, Armenians, Cophti or Christians of Egypt; the Ethiopians or Abyssenes, and the Maronites, who are thought to be Monothelites' (3.1/i.97).

## 7.9 – Pertinacy<sup>109</sup>

More has to be said in conclusion, however. I have averred earlier that Field attempts to speak generously in his estimation of other churches. He is very reluctant to identify heresy, and even when he finds error in this church or that, he is keen to note such error as not being damnable error whenever he can. This raises the question as to what error (and what schism) is damnable, and what error is not damnable (and thus does not amount to heresy of such sort as to remove the offending person or the offending church from the compass of 'true', catholic churches). The key in Field's thinking is the matter of pertinacy.

If a person or church is in serious error (i.e., in a central point of doctrine), but is unaware of it, and no attempt is made to correct the error; or if the offender does not have the sight to see the truth of the error; and if the offender would be corrected if only they were to see the truth, and would not obstinately and knowingly and with understanding cling on to the error, then the error is not 'pertinacious'. It might be serious, but not pertinacious. It does not exclude the offender from the true church. But if the offender is aware of the error, with understanding, and holds it nonetheless, and with obstinacy, then the error is pertinacious. It is damnable heresy, and excludes the offender from the true church, if the error is in a point of central doctrine.

It is interesting how Field applies this principle to the Church of Rome. The Tridentine Church of Rome has had every opportunity to come to a realisation of the truth, says Field, and has refused to do so. Its leaders and theologians certainly understand the issues, but with obstinacy cling on to error, and persist in what Field regards as their schism. The error is pertinacious, and damnable. A contemporary Romanist, deliberately and determinedly holding to the Romanist position with full understanding, and declining to acknowledge the rightness of the Reformation, cannot have hope of salvation in Field's view. But in respect of members of the Church of Rome up to the point of the Reformation, Field is reluctant to draw such a conclusion. The error of the prevailing papist faction is certainly pertinacious, even before the Reformation, for those advocates of Romanist error knew exactly what they stood for, and why, and it was damnable, pertinacious error.

But as we have already noted, Field believes that down through the ages, even within the Church of Rome, there were, constantly, theologians and writers and leaders who did not hold to all the errors of the papist faction; and where they did hold to some errors, it may have been because they were children of their time, without the impetus or encouragement to re-think these matters anew before Luther's time. Field names them by many dozens. Whereas Hooker refers to theologians of previous

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<sup>109</sup> Field's spelling of 'pertinacy'.

generations too, several tens of them, Field massively exceeds Hooker's total, as previously noted. Field names them and quotes them from every age of the church, without any significant gap, through the entire medieval era, and, before it, the patristic era. He treats the likes of Peter Lombard, Robert Grosseteste, Bonaventura, Nicholas of Lyra, Pierre d'Ailly,<sup>110</sup> Jean Charlier de Gerson (despite his role in the condemnation of Hus, in respect of which Field absolves him of much blame),<sup>111</sup> and countless others with considerable sympathy. For them there has certainly been hope of salvation, because they did not partake with 'pertinacy' in the errors of papism.

Indeed, it is a central facet of Field's principal argument as we have stated earlier that down through the centuries from Christian beginnings in the days of the apostles until his present day, there have constantly been representatives of the complete truth of the Christian gospel, who with understanding and commitment have stood for that truth. Thus, and importantly for Field's thesis, the central truths of the gospel of Christ have been handed down faithfully and constantly through all the Christian centuries, without a break. The failure of the Church of Rome is not that true doctrine had disappeared without a constant champion, but that it had been suppressed by the 'prevailing faction' of the papists.

Likewise, Field believes the vast masses of the common people have been held captive to the power-pretensions of Rome down through the centuries and, therefore, he is reluctant to condemn the common people indiscriminately. They cannot be charged with pertinacious error, even now in the post-Reformation era, unless they themselves have understanding of the position they are holding, and obstinacy enough to reject Reformation doctrine. Rather, they can have hope of salvation, because it is the papist faction of Rome that has deprived the masses of the truth. It is worth noting also that it is the plight of the masses in the Eastern churches that prompts Field to be so scathing of Rome, in that Rome has consigned the vast numbers of eastern souls to perdition simply by their membership (which they can hardly avoid) of the Eastern churches.

The fact that God had a true church in the world throughout all ages (in Field's view commencing with Adam), in an unbroken line, is of course what has been termed the doctrine of the indefectibility of the church. The Reformers generally seem to have held this view, so Field is by no means alone. Field's own term, which he uses frequently, is the 'perpetuity' of the church. To Field, the doctrine of the perpetuity of the church entails the view that the true church was always to be found in (as a subset of, but not coterminous with) the Latin Church, for there was no other church in the West for many centuries; it was the church in which 'our fathers lived and died' (Field uses the expression

<sup>110</sup> 1350/51-1420, chancellor of the university of Paris (1389), bishop of Cambrai (1397). A.k.a. Petrus Cameracensis, Petrus Aliacensis or Peter d'Alliaco, and also the cardinal of Cambrai.

<sup>111</sup> See later for an assessment of Field defending Gerson.

frequently) – i.e. the Latin Church was not only the true church (or, rather, did not only *contain* the true church) when they, 'our fathers', were living, but remained the true church after they died; it continued, it was continuous. 'For how should there be a Church in the world, the perpetuity whereof they almost constantly defend';<sup>112</sup> 'yet the promise of Christ concerning the perpetuity of his Church might still be verified';<sup>113</sup> 'For we must not think, that God was without a Church among men at any time'.<sup>114</sup>

Field is absolutely insistent that the Latin Church continued to be the true catholic church in spite of the papist faction which separated from it doctrinally. The heretical innovations of the papists were never constantly believed by the great majority of the Fathers and medieval schoolmen, Field contends.<sup>115</sup> This would seem to be a novel claim. If this judgment is correct, it suggests that Field's writings and thought are important enough to warrant their further study by scholars of the Early Modern era.

### 7.10 – Paul Avis, Anglicanism and the Christian Church

To conclude this chapter I wish to interact briefly with Paul Avis' book, *Anglicanism and the Christian Church*.<sup>116</sup> The first edition of this was published in 1989. Avis gives Field a more thorough theological analysis than any other modern (or earlier) writer that I have been able to find – but still just 7 pages of text – and thus it could perhaps be argued that this work represents a minor counterexample to my thesis that Field has been overlooked.<sup>117</sup> If so, then it would be just the single counterexample. But in fact Avis, despite being a serious, competent and thorough scholar with an encyclopaedic knowledge of his subject, makes a significant mistake in his analysis of Field, which I shall analyse now. My conclusion is that if someone of Avis' calibre can misread Field, it is certainly the case that Field needs to be more widely read and understood if his contribution to the development of Anglicanism is to be given the weight I believe it is worth. The purpose of the analysis following is to support my thesis that scholarship would profit from a recovery of interest in Field. Field having been overlooked for so long, Avis has done what few others had done thitherto. Avis' purpose is to assess the development of Anglicanism, and his use of Field is one contribution out of many towards his end. With no substantial secondary literature to go on, Avis went to the

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<sup>112</sup> (1.10/i.32).

<sup>113</sup> (1.10/i.35).

<sup>114</sup> (1.4/i.16).

<sup>115</sup> Showing how Field justifies his assertion that the historical Church of Rome, less its prevailing papist faction, had always been a truly protestant church, would be a thoroughly worthwhile and intriguing project, which in fact I myself have done considerable work on, but is beyond the scope of this present study.

<sup>116</sup> Paul Avis, *Anglicanism and the Christian Church*, 1<sup>st</sup> edn (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1989).

<sup>117</sup> Since writing this chapter one other study has appeared, that of Dawn (PhD thesis), analysing Field's view of predestination and the Lord's supper.

primary source, 2,000 pages of Field's text, but was hardly able comprehensively to do so given the much wider scope of his work. He misread Field, as I show below; but then it is easy to misread Field. Arguably, Field is easier to read than Hooker, at least for a reader with a systematic, logical frame of mind. But my own experience is that Field's style takes some getting used to. I, perforce of conducting this current study, have studied Field rather more comprehensively, and for that reason alone have been able to offer a correction to Avis. I entered into a correspondence with Avis, who gladly accepted my suggestions, and he has corrected his mistake in the more recent second edition of his work.<sup>118</sup> The following paragraphs attend to Avis' first edition and to his former error regarding Field's conception of the church.

Avis correctly observes that Field is keen to develop a flexible definition of the church. As we have noted above, the church, to Field, is either tightly defined but un-demarcatable to mankind (the church mystical, or invisible, the elect, known only to God), or very loosely defined (all those who profess Christ, even heretics, schismatics and hypocrites), or includes or excludes the schismatics and heretics depending on exactly which 'acceptation' of the church is under consideration at any one time. We have seen that what Field means by the 'true church' is that acceptation of the church which is as tightly defined as it can be whilst remaining circumscribable and locatable by man. The true church is the church excluding heretics and schismatics, and defined thus (and known to the observer) by Field's 'notes'; but the 'hypocrites and wicked men' and 'feigned believers' cannot be excluded by a human definition, because only God knows their identity. Avis does see the importance to Field of having this flexible and useful conception of the church.

But Avis fails to see that it is Field's notes of the church that circumscribe the true church, excluding schismatics and heretics. He writes, analysing Field's view of the church:

This visible society is distinguished from other human societies and other religions of the world by three marks: doctrine ('the entire profession of those supernatural verities which God hath revealed in Christ his Son'), sacraments ('the use of such holy ceremonies and sacraments as he hath instituted'), and the ministry ('lawful pastors and guides, appointed, authorised and sanctified') (I, 65).<sup>[119]</sup> Field marks an advance on the Reformation concept of the *notae ecclesiae* and begins to develop a distinctive Anglican ecclesiology, in that these three notes are not marks of the true church against the false, but of the whole Christian society over against the world.<sup>120</sup>

This last sentence was his principal error. Avis suggests that the three notes *do not* delineate the true church, but the church more generally considered, including heretics and schismatics. This is not right. The notes *do* demarcate the true church, and *do not* include heretics and schismatics, as we

<sup>118</sup> Paul Avis, *Anglicanism and the Christian Church*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2002).

<sup>119</sup> I.e. (2.2/1.65). The EHS text actually has 'authorized'.

<sup>120</sup> Avis, *Anglicanism*, 1<sup>st</sup> edn, 69.

have shown. Avis continues, 'Heretics and schismatics bear these three marks and so are to be counted as within the visible church'. This is half true: in fact heretics and schismatics *do not* 'bear these three marks', and so are not of the true church, but they are certainly 'to be counted as within the visible church' more generally considered.

Avis has up to a point compared Field with Hooker, but it needs to be stressed that whereas Hooker directed his work predominantly against the nonconformist puritans, Field was not concerned with that aim, except peripherally. Field directed his entire work against the Tridentine Church of Rome. A chapter here and there in Field's *Of the Church* does argue, for example, against lay elders,<sup>121</sup> or against extreme disciplinarianism,<sup>122</sup> but this is not prominent. Apart from a few brief forays into other territory, Field's polemic is directed almost entirely against papism. This is the predominant *modus vivendi* of the work. Thus we cannot set Field and Hooker against each other, nor as simply parallel to each other, but as complementary to one another. It demonstrates Field as having a unique contribution to make to the development of Anglican ecclesiology – he does not echo Hooker, but rather makes a significant contribution of his own. So Field and Hooker together place the Church of England in its unique position distinct from presbyterianism (Hooker) and Romanism (Field).

Nowe it followeth that we search out the true markes of this Church, which we call the true [...] Catholike Church. [...] It followeth then, that she is the pure Church and true mother, who bringeth forth [...] & norisheth vs through the worde, knitteth vs to Christ, [...] shee is the true mother, in which the worde of God is purely preached, and the Sacraments according to the same worde duely administred.<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>121</sup> Book 5, chapter 26.

<sup>122</sup> Book 1, chapter 18.

<sup>123</sup> Philippe de Mornay, Seigneur du Plessis-Marly (1549-1623), *A Notable Treatise of the Church*, tr. by Jo. Feilde (London: 1579), Sig. Ci-Cii. 'Jo. Feilde', here, is John Field the puritan.

## Chapter 8

### – Ministerial Orders and Bishops –

#### 8. Abstract of this chapter

In this chapter I assess Field's doctrine of ministerial orders and his justification of bishops, and thus of the ministry and validity, of the Church of England. I demonstrate how the defining aetiology of bishops in the church is the need for 'orderly connexion' within the church. The ministry of presbyters and bishops is apostolic, and therefore in continuation of the apostles, in that it is a ministry of the apostolic gospel handed down by the apostles to the early church. Finally, I note Field's careful distinction between the bishops' power of order and power of jurisdiction.

#### 8.1 – Ministerial Orders and Bishops

The ministry of pastors and teachers is absolutely and essentially necessary to the being of the Church. For how should there be a Church gathered, guided, and governed, without a ministry? Therefore the ministry of those whom God sanctified to Himself to teach, instruct and govern His people, is an essential mark and note of the Church.<sup>1</sup>

We have seen how Field stresses the importance of church unity – it is a *sine qua non* for any right understanding of the true church, and only has a valid definition, in Field's view, when considered as unity in apostolic Christian truth – i.e., doctrinal unity. This is of pertinent interest to us, for we shall see that it largely drives his understanding of ministerial orders (especially of bishops). We shall confine ourselves now to this narrower concern, namely Field's thoroughly high view of *ministerial orders* in general and of *bishops* in particular. We have considered Field's 'notes' of the church, and have established that ministerial orders (as specified by the third 'note') are no mere adjunct to the church, nor an optional extra, nor a peripheral aspect, but an utterly essential and central feature of it, in Field's view. And so the essential place, in Field's estimation, of ordained ministry in the church is becoming clear in our study – and yet it is not a self-generating priority, as if to say that ministry is important (or that the clergy are important), or has an important place, in and of itself, without any external reference, or for a self-serving goal; for the prime motivating force of this high view of ministerial orders is, as we have begun to see and will continue to see with great emphasis shortly,

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<sup>1</sup> (2.6/1.82).

apostolic Christian truth, and the need for this truth to be preserved and propagated in unity. 'It can be no church that hath no ministry'.<sup>2</sup> In respect of self-serving clergy, Field is the successor to the Reformers generally in their desire to reform not only the doctrine of the church, but also its morals, particularly with reference to the conduct of the clergy, and even more particularly in the tendency, as they saw it, of the medieval church's bishops (and higher) to annex to themselves excessive pomp and power.

## 8.2 – Orderly Connexion<sup>3</sup>

Thus unity is one of the prime driving forces for his understanding of ministerial orders. It is not the only one, for we have already observed the importance of ministers 'to teach, instruct and govern His people';<sup>4</sup> and yet, of course, these two aspects of the orders of ministry, namely, (a) to preserve unity, and (b) to teach the truth of the Christian faith, are not distinct, for unity is precisely unity of truth, as we have seen. So we should see Field's view of the fundamental purpose of the ordained ministry as being to preserve and propagate the apostolic Christian truth in unity down through the ages – *antiquity* of truth, *succession* of truth, *unity* of truth, *universality* of truth without heresy or schism; only when such is true of the church, Field believes, can it justify calling itself the one, true, *catholic* church.

We recall Field's three 'notes' of the church,<sup>5</sup> concluding with the crucial (as we have argued) third note, 'order of ministry, and due obedience yielded thereunto'.<sup>6</sup>

The principal reason for Field's inclusion of the third note is, as already noted, the need to exclude the schismatics from the compass of the true catholic church, for schismatics, whilst perhaps remaining orthodox in matters of belief, have broken fellowship with the church, and have thus compromised the church's unity. But the clear teaching and guiding role of the ordained ministers

<sup>2</sup> (3.39/1.316). A useful survey of the background to Reformation thought on the church's eldership can be found in Elsie Anne McKee, *Elders and the Plural Ministry: the Role of Exegetical History in Illuminating John Calvin's Theology* (Droz, 1988).

<sup>3</sup> Field's term.

<sup>4</sup> (2.6/1.82).

<sup>5</sup> By way of reminder: 'First, the entire profession of those supernatural verities, which God hath revealed in Christ his Son:

*Secondly*, the use of such holy ceremonies and sacraments as he hath instituted and appointed to serve as provocations to godliness, preservations from sin, memorials of the benefits of Christ, warrants for the greater security of our belief, and marks of distinction to separate his own from strangers:

*Thirdly*, an union or connexion of men in this profession and use of these sacraments, under lawful pastors and guides, appointed, authorised, and sanctified, to direct and lead them in the happy ways of eternal salvation' (2.2/1.65, italics and formatting mine); to which we should remind ourselves of the requirement for obedience: 'order of ministry, and due obedience yielded thereunto' (1.10/1.31).

<sup>6</sup> (1.10/1.31).



indicates a wider brief: they serve to propagate and preserve the apostolic Christian truth, the ‘faith once delivered’. That is to say, Field’s theology of the ordained ministry of the Church of England is far larger than as simply required by his delineation of the notes.<sup>7</sup>

Thus the church is connectional in Field’s view. It is not a hierarchical structure of a sort which is domineering and authoritarian by nature – these latter terms are foreign to Field’s understanding of the Church of England, though he clearly sees them as aptly describing the Church of Rome. The term ‘orderly connexion’, as an expression denoting the essential unity of the church, and used frequently by Field, refers primarily to all the people of the church, as in Field’s third ‘note’, where the church is described as ‘an union or connexion of men in this profession and use of these sacraments, *under* lawful pastors and guides, appointed, authorised, and sanctified, to direct and lead them in the happy ways of eternal salvation’.<sup>8</sup> But in a derivative way the term is appropriated to the body of pastors themselves, as in ‘the coherence and connexion of the pastors and bishops amongst themselves’.<sup>9</sup> Indeed, Field emphasises the imperative of the third note: The church ‘cannot be known and discerned from the conventicles of schismatics, by right faith and due use of Sacraments only, without the addition of orderly connexion’.<sup>10</sup>

Thus it would be a mistake to think of the unity of the church as pertaining simply to the company of pastors, for it properly describes the whole company of God’s people; yet it is the company of pastors, divinely appointed, whose ministry upholds and preserves the unity, the connection, the order of the church by their teaching, and by their guiding the people in the truth of the historic, apostolic and catholic Christian faith.

Let us remind ourselves<sup>11</sup> of Field’s view that ‘The unity of the Church consisteth principally in three things’,<sup>12</sup> namely observing first, the rule of faith and the sacraments, secondly, the ‘connexion’ of pastors, and thirdly, the submission of the people to those pastors.<sup>13</sup> We have observed that the

<sup>7</sup> Recall: ‘We say, that there is nothing, besides sincerity of profession and right use of Sacraments, essential to the Church as a collected multitude, but only order and orderly connexion, or union of men concurring in these; while some authorised thereunto do teach, direct, and command, others obey’ (2.4/i.75).

<sup>8</sup> (2.2/i.65), italics mine.

<sup>9</sup> (2.7/i.86). Likewise: ‘the due connexion of many pastors, and the flocks depending on them, among themselves’ (3.41/i.330), and ‘guides appointed by [Christ], [. . .] all holden in a sweet coherence and connexion amongst themselves’ (2.7/i.85).

<sup>10</sup> ‘[The church is] nothing else but an orderly multitude of right believers, [. . .] collected and gathered in the true faith of Christ, and hope of eternal happiness; which [. . .] cannot be known and discerned from the conventicles of schismatics, by right faith and due use of Sacraments only, without the addition of orderly connexion’ (2.4/i.76). Some of the quotations in this section have already been cited in our discussion on the notes of the church.

<sup>11</sup> From our discussion on the notes of the church.

<sup>12</sup> (3.41/i.330).

<sup>13</sup> There are frequent, multiple re-statements of these points:

1. ‘[I]n observing and holding the rule of faith once delivered to the saints’ (3.41/i.330); or again,

second and third of these are subservient to the first; and that the second, the ‘connexion of many pastors’, is not a self-existing, self-authenticating hierarchy, but rather exists under the headship of Christ to promote and maintain the unity of the church: the pastors do not *define* the church; rather, they *maintain* the *unity* of the church – the church is not the company of pastors, nor of the bishops, nor even the ‘orderly connexion’ itself as an entity; rather, it is the ‘orderly multitude of right believers’.<sup>14</sup>

Later we shall see Field’s view of the particular role of bishops in this regard, but for now we move to Field’s examination of ministerial orders generally, and of their apostolic and, indeed, divine origin. Regarding his assessment of the true ordering of God’s people, he claims, ‘I have endeavoured by the true description of them out of the Scripture, and the authentical records of antiquity’.<sup>15</sup>

### 8.3 – An Exalted Understanding of Ministerial Orders

[I]n the Church of God is found an entire profession of the saving truth of God, order of holy ministry, sacraments by virtue thereof administered, and a blessed unity and fellowship of the people of God, knit together in the bonds of peace, under the command of lawful pastors and guides set over them to direct them in the ways of eternal happiness.<sup>16</sup>

Evidently, then, Field holds the ordained ministry of the church in very high esteem, for ‘It can be no church that hath no ministry’.<sup>17</sup> In fact, Field devotes an entire book, the fifth out of five, to the subject, having already in the first four given thorough attention to this crucial aspect of the church – and book 5 itself is nearly twice as long as the other four put together. So the remaining sections of this chapter will focus on a brief analysis of Field’s assessment of what he calls ‘the diverse degrees, orders, and callings of those men, to whom the government of this Church is committed’.<sup>18</sup>

At the start of his Book 5, Field presents at length how God established and ordered his Old Testament church up to the incarnation of Christ, and then sets forth ‘the excellency of Christ our

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‘in respect of the rule of faith and use of the sacraments of salvation’ (2.7/i.86);

2. ‘in respect of the coherence and connexion of the pastors and bishops amongst themselves’ (2.7/i.86); or again, ‘in the due connexion of many pastors, and the flocks depending on them, amongst themselves’ (3.41/i.330); or again, ‘in respect of the same head, Christ, and guides appointed by him, [...] all holden in a sweet coherence and connexion amongst themselves, as if there were but one episcopal chair and office in the world; which unity of pastors and bishops, though they be many and joined in equal commission, without dependence from one another, Christ signified, by directing His words especially to Peter: “Feed my sheep, feed my lambs”’ (2.7/i.85, quoting John 21:15-17);

3. ‘in due and submissive obedience of the people to their pastors’ (2.7/i.86), or again, ‘in the subjection of the people to their pastors’ (3.41/i.330), all formatting and numbering mine.

<sup>14</sup> (2.4/i.76), or ‘that blessed company [...] of them that believe’ (1.5/i.19).

<sup>15</sup> (5.ER/III.ix).

<sup>16</sup> (1.13/i.42).

<sup>17</sup> (3.39/i.316), and ‘how should there be a Church gathered without a ministry?’ (1.10/i.33).

<sup>18</sup> (1.6/i.25).

Saviour, [...] what great things he did and suffered for us, to reconcile us unto God'.<sup>19</sup> He then proceeds to describe the ordering of ministry in the Christian church.<sup>20</sup>

### 8.3.1 – Apostles

Field quotes Ephesians 4:8 etc., ("he gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers [...]"), and states that of these the apostles were pre-eminent.<sup>21</sup> Field also states, here and not infrequently, that, in respect of the apostles, the prophets and the evangelists, these were 'temporary, and to continue but for a time'. This is important for his view of revelation. I cannot deal with this at length here, but briefly, there can be no continuing apostles or apostleship or of prophets or prophecy, otherwise God's revelation of the divine mysteries through them is by consequence incomplete; in which case the deposit for posterity of the apostles is not a sure 'rule of faith'. Field cannot and will not surrender this vital notion. Interestingly, Field includes evangelists amongst those who were temporary, that is, for the duration of the ministry of the apostles. This conundrum is resolved by the observation that for Field the evangelists were not roving evangelists bringing the gospel to new cities and territory; rather, they were the four gospel writers. Further discussion of the evangelists and prophets is beyond the scope of this study. The ministry of the apostles is, for Field, foundational for the understanding of later Christian ministry, for (a) the apostles were directly commissioned by Christ, having been direct witnesses of his life and teaching, and (b) although the apostles were in a sense irreplaceable, yet the ministry of their successors, the presbyters, and their assistants, the deacons, derives in direct continuation from them, and upon their commissioning.<sup>22</sup> Indeed, the apostles, having necessarily been eye-witnesses

<sup>19</sup> (5.22/III.149), and: 'what the benefits are which he procured for us and bestowed on us' (5.22/III.149).

<sup>20</sup> 'Now it remaineth that we see to whom he committed the publishing of the joyful reconciliation between God and man, the conversion of the world unto himself, and the government of such as should by believing become his people, when having finished the great work he came to perform, he was to return back to that God his Father that sent him' (5.22/III.149).

<sup>21</sup> 'Amongst all those messengers of glad tidings, and ministers of Christ, appointed by him for the gathering together of the saints,

- the apostles were chief and principal;
- evangelists were assistants, which they used for the better settling and perfecting of things happily begun by them, and the writing of the evangelical histories concerning Christ:
- the prophets were such as foretold future things, that knew all secrets, and opened the hidden mysteries of God, speaking to the consciences of men in a strange and admirable manner; [...]

These were temporary, and to continue but for a time' (5.22/III.150, bulleting and formatting mine).

<sup>22</sup> '[A]fter [Christ] had wrought all righteousness, and performed the work for which he came, he returned back to God that sent him; choosing out some of them that had been conversant with him in the days of his flesh, that had heard the words of his divine wisdom, and were eye witnesses of all the things he did and suffered; and sending them as his Father sent him, who were therefore named *apostles*. These had many excellent pre-eminencies, proper to those beginnings, and fit for the founding of Christian Churches; as

- immediate calling,
- infallibility of judgement,
- general commission,
- the understanding and knowledge of all tongues,

of Christ, *could not* be replaced, *de facto*, by succeeding generations – there could be no further apostles: ‘In which things, when they had finished their course, they left none to succeed them’.<sup>23</sup> But the continuing church can and must remain apostolic; no further ministers would be apostles, but the continuing ministry can and must remain apostolic in order for the church to; as we have seen, every aspect of the authenticity of a present church is pushed back, by Field, to the apostles.

### 8.3.2 – Presbyters (and Deacons)

To Field, presbyters are those entrusted with the ministry of word, sacrament and government of the church, whereas deacons are those who assist and perform lesser service.<sup>24</sup> The presbyters’ duty is ‘pastoral’, but the deacons are ‘inferior’.<sup>25</sup> Field’s (frequent) use of the term ‘inferior’ should not be understood pejoratively – it refers simply to a lower rank in what inevitably is a hierarchical ordering of the ministry of God’s church. We shall not significantly consider the office of *deacon* any further in this study, save to note here the essential difference between this and that of the presbyter – for the difference is marked, and the deacon and presbyter are not to be confused: the deacon is merely an assistant, and may not otherwise do what a presbyter may do, as we shall see.

Field is emphatic that the office of presbyter is an exalted one, and of apostolic and, indeed, of divine commission. It is to the presbyterate that the duty is entrusted ‘to teach, instruct and govern His people’<sup>26</sup>, and Field emphasises this latter, mindful of his desire to emphasise ministry of the word over against a sacerdotal ministry.<sup>27</sup> Having already separately given us his treatment of deacons, ‘it

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- power to confirm their doctrine by signs and wonders, and
  - to confer the miraculous gifts of the Spirit upon other also, by the imposition of their hands’ (5.ER/III.vi, italics, bulleting and formatting mine).

<sup>23</sup> (5.ER/III.vi).

<sup>24</sup> ‘Having spoken of the apostles’ power and office, and the largeness of that commission, it remaineth that we come to speak of them to whom they recommended the managing of Church-affairs and the ministry of holy things when they left the world. They [...] were of two sorts:

- *first*, such as they trusted with the ministry of the word and sacraments, and government of God’s people; and
- *secondly*, such other as they appointed to be assistant to them, and to perform the meaner services, though necessary also.

The *former* sort are all comprehended under one common name of *presbyters*, that is, fatherly guides of God’s Church and people;

the *latter* are *deacons*, and such other inferior ministers as attend the necessities of the saints, and assist the principal guides of the Church’ (5.25/III.187, italics, bulleting and formatting mine).

<sup>25</sup> ‘[Y]et out of their more large, ample, and immediate commissions, they [the apostles] authorized others to preach the gospel, administer sacraments, to bind and loose, and to perform other like pastoral duties, sanctifying and ordaining them to this work, by the imposition of hands. These they honoured with the glorious title of *presbyters*, that is, fatherly guides of God’s Church and people; and knowing the weight of the burden they laid on their shoulders, added unto them as assistants other of an inferior degree and rank, whom they named *deacons* or ministers’ (5.ER/III.vii, italics mine).

<sup>26</sup> (2.6/I.82).

<sup>27</sup> ‘[T]he name of presbyter [...] in the writings of the apostles doth ever note out unto us a minister of the word and sacraments. The reason why the apostles chose this word rather than the name of *sacerdos*, which we commonly translate priest (though the English word priest come of presbyter,) was, lest there should be a confusion of the

remaineth that we speak of them that are trusted with the ministry of the word and sacraments, and the government of God's people, comprehended under one common name of presbyters, that is fatherly guides of God's church and people'.<sup>28</sup> We note that Field uses terminology ('ministry', 'fatherly guides') appropriate to humble service and not to princely rule, a matter which will continue to exercise him, as we shall see. When he uses terms, as he will of presbyters and/or bishops, such as 'superior' or 'eminent' or 'power' or 'government' or 'pre-eminence', it will continue to be in the neutral sense of denoting mere rank within an order and the office appropriate to that rank, and decidedly not, again, in the sense of princeliness – and we shall see this too.

The 'government' of God's people, though noted separately, can hardly be taken as a totally distinct operation, in Field's thought, from that of the ministry of word and sacraments – they are all of a piece; for we have seen already, and will again, that one of the great imperatives for God's church, namely the preservation of unity, is precisely a preservation in God's church of the apostolic Christian truth, once delivered to the saints – a universality of truth, a unity of truth, a succession of truth, an antiquity of truth. To govern God's church is to guard it and guide it thus in fatherly care. This government of the church by the presbyterate will inevitably entail the giving of direction, and even discipline, to which the people must submit; but the reason is not to bring the church into subjection to an inappropriate self-serving power, in the way that Field considers Rome to have done, but to guide and preserve the church in authentic apostolicity.

Field makes a point of emphasising that there is not a third order of ministry, namely lay-elders,<sup>29</sup> lying between deacons and presbyters, who have the government of the church as their responsibility though not the ministry of word and sacraments, for such is impossible – these ministries belong together; they are inseparable. 'The government of the Church is in respect of [only] two sorts of men, the clergy and the laity. Touching the former, they are to be tried and approved for their life and learning; they are to be ordained with solemn imposition of hands'.<sup>30</sup> That is, pastors and not laity, not even 'lay-elders'; and yet also, pastors and not princely<sup>31</sup> rulers, pastors

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ministers of the Old Testament, who were to offer sacrifices unto God, figuring the coming of Christ, with those of the New; and to show that none should be appointed ministers but men of ripe age and confirmed judgment' (5.26/III.206, italics original to Field).

<sup>28</sup> (5.26/III.201).

<sup>29</sup> '[I]n the Acts, where the apostles are said to have constituted elders in every Church, pastors and ministers are meant, and not laymen, is strongly confirmed by that in the twentieth of Acts, where the elders of the Church of Ephesus convened before Paul are commanded to "feed the flock of Christ, over which they were appointed overseers;" whence it followeth inevitably that they were pastors' (5.26/III.204).

<sup>30</sup> (5.26/III.202). The phrase 'imposition of hands' occurs also in the preface to the ordinal of the 1559 Book of Common Prayer.

<sup>31</sup> '[P]rincely' is Field's own term, as we shall see.

chosen from among the laity for their 'life and learning' and respect in which they are held ('ripe age and confirmed judgment').<sup>32</sup>

To be ordained is no mere temporary expedient; it is a solemn commission deriving from the perpetual need for the church to be constantly guarded and guided: 'the offices of bishops and pastors' are 'perpetual' and not 'annual and but for a certain time'.<sup>33</sup>

Field concludes, then, quoting Jerome (writing on Isaiah): 'We also in the Church have our senate, the company of presbyters', and (writing on Titus): 'The Churches were governed by the common advice and counsel of the presbyters'.<sup>34</sup>

### 8.3.3 – Bishops

Amongst these fatherly guides of God's Church and people, for the preventing of dissension, the avoiding of confusion, and the more orderly managing of the important affairs of Almighty God, they [the apostles] established a most excellent, divine, and heavenly order, giving unto one amongst the presbyters of each Church an eminent and fatherly power, so that the rest might do nothing without him; whom for distinction's sake, and to express the honour of his degree and place, afore and above other, we name a *bishop*.<sup>35</sup>

We observe several things. First, Field pushes the foundation of the order of bishops fully back to the apostles themselves ('they established [...]'). Field would not say, as would some these days, that bishops as leaders amongst the presbyters arose *after*, albeit, perhaps, *soon after*, the time of the apostles. And bishops were not merely an apostolic invention, but were an institution in the will of God himself – 'they established a most excellent, *divine, and heavenly order*' (italics mine).

Secondly, the bishops are to be chosen from *amongst* the presbyters, and from amongst the bishops are to be chosen the metropolitans and patriarchs; in other words, an unashamed hierarchy is being formed amongst the presbyterate in Field's scheme, with corresponding terminology such as 'afore', 'above' and 'before'; 'eminent', 'honour' and 'power'; 'first' and 'chief'. Again, we shall conclude that this far from denotes princeliness, but rather denotes merely the place occupied in the hierarchical order, for the emphasis is on 'fatherly' power and 'care'. In fact, Field seems to avoid using terms such as 'hierarchy' and 'hierarchical', preferring instead terms such as his favourites, 'order' and

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<sup>32</sup> (5.26/III.206).

<sup>33</sup> (5.26/III.204).

<sup>34</sup> (5.26/III.207).

<sup>35</sup> (5.ER/III.vii), italics mine.

‘connexion’, as in ‘order and orderly connexion’.<sup>36</sup> In using the term ‘hierarchy’, then, we note that it needs to be understood functionally (for the good order of the church), rather than ontologically.

Thirdly, the presbyters who are not bishops are subject to those who are; the driving force is the need for order and unity, ‘for the preventing of dissension, the avoiding of confusion, and the more orderly managing of the important affairs of Almighty God’.<sup>37</sup> Indeed, the entire hierarchy has unity as its chief aim; for example, Field further argues that it is the metropolitans and patriarchs whose *modus existendi* is to prevent the appropriation of excessive power by the bishops.<sup>38</sup> Indeed, and this is an important point, whereas the entire presbyterate has the ministry of word and sacraments as its fundamental duty, the structuring of the presbyterate into a hierarchy as above has unity and the avoiding of ‘dangerous [or] damnable schism’<sup>39</sup> as its entire *raison d’être*, for ‘Schismatics are they that break the unity of the Church, and refuse to submit themselves and yield obedience to their lawful pastors and guides’.<sup>40</sup> Nowhere, as far as I can see, does Field ever give any other reason for the apostolic appointment of bishops, etc. We shall return to this theme, but at this point we note an important point: it is the *entire* ‘orderly connexion’ of the whole church, people and ministers together, in which unity has its focus, in Field’s view.

Fourthly, it is ‘for distinction’s sake’ that the term ‘bishop’ is chosen to distinguish this role from that of ‘presbyter’ – Field makes no attempt to equate the two roles with the two respective terms as used in Scripture. He does not even address the question (much debated in the modern era) of whether the terms *episcopos* and *presbuteros* variously used in the New Testament texts are synonymous there with each other (J.B. Lightfoot advocating this position, for example), or whether instead these terms in New Testament times respectively denoted the prototype *bishop* and *presbyter* as historically understood in the Western church.

Field is also concerned to identify a church with a place, and a bishop with a church and its place, and to note the apostolic origin of this arrangement too.<sup>41</sup> To Field, a ‘place’ is a major city (e.g., Ephesus)

<sup>36</sup> (2.4/i.75).

<sup>37</sup> (5.ER/III.vii).

<sup>38</sup> ‘[F]urther, by a most wise disposition provided, that amongst bishops all should not challenge all things unto themselves, but that there should be in several provinces several bishops, who should be first and chief amongst the brethren; and again constituted and placed certain other in greater cities, who might take care of more than the former. The former of these were named *metropolitans*, the later were known by the name of *patriarchs*, or chief fathers, who also in order and honour were one before and after another’ (5.ER/III.vii, italics mine). These latter ranks of minister will not be pursued further in this study.

<sup>39</sup> (3.5/i.163).

<sup>40</sup> (1.13/i.42).

<sup>41</sup> ‘When the apostles first founded Churches, and assigned to such as they ordained to the work of the ministry the several parts of the flock of Christ, [...] they so sorted and divided out particular Churches, that a city and the places near adjoining made but one Church: whereupon we shall find in the holy Scriptures, that to ordain presbyters [...] in every Church, and in every city, are all one. Now because Churches of so large extent required many ministers of the

which has its church and its bishop. Satellite towns and villages would come within the remit of the city church and thus under the authority of its bishop. A bishop's church may well have more than one congregation, and more than one presbyter accordingly, but it is still to be counted as one church with one principal pastor.

Fifthly, therefore, we note Field's assertion that the bishop is the chief pastor of the local *church* (and not, for example, the bishop of the *See* or *Diocese* – such terms would be anachronistic were they applied to the New Testament origins of the church). To Field, a church is local to the extent that it is defined by a city and its environs. There is no discussion in Field's writings of how large a city had to be to have a church of its own (except by implication; for example, Ephesus, noted above and below), or on the other hand how small (or how far away) a place might be to be included in the remit of a larger nearby city. That the New Testament sometimes speaks of *churches* (plural; for example, the 'churches in Galatia', or the 'churches of Judea', in Galatians 1:2,22) is also not observed. So whilst it is clear that to Field the basic unit of the church is the local church, with one bishop as the chief of possibly many presbyters, there is no discussion of just how local 'local' is.

Field does not justify his assertion that 'of one Church there must be but one pastor'; he appears to accept it as a given. He does, though, go on to assert that this is the biblical pattern – whereas it 'is not to be doubted but that there were many presbyters', justified from Acts 20:28, 'that is, ministers of the word and sacraments, in so large a Church as that of Ephesus was', yet 'we read in the Revelation of St. John, of the Angel of the Church of Ephesus [Revelation 2:1], to whom the Spirit of God directeth letters from heaven, as to the pastor of that Church'. That is, many presbyters yet one principal presbyter, 'to whom only the Lord did write from heaven, to whom an eminent power was given'.<sup>42</sup> Likewise the rest of the seven churches of Asia.

Field seems only to appeal to this one biblical passage in Revelation 1 and 2 to justify the principle of one pre-eminent pastor (and that without justifying his interesting though not unique exegesis, making the 'angel' of the church to be the bishop) – he does not seem to be interested in citing Timothy or Titus, for example, as early examples of bishops. However, he proceeds to show how it has always been thus in the history of the church. For example, he quotes St Jerome's testimony 'that in the Church of Alexandria, from the time of Mark the Evangelist, there was ever one whom the

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word and sacraments, and yet of one Church there must be one pastor; the apostles, in settling the state of these Churches, did so constitute in them many presbyters with power to teach, instruct, and direct the people of God, that yet they appointed one only to be the chief pastor of the place, ordaining that the rest should be but his assistants, not presuming to do any thing [sic] without him' (5.27/III.210).

<sup>42</sup> The full quotation is: 'to whom only the Lord did write from heaven, to whom an eminent power was given, who was trusted with the government of that Church and people in more special sort than any of the rest, and therefore challenged by name by Almighty God for the things there found to be amiss, the rest being passed over in silence' (5.27/III.211).



presbyters of that Church chose out of themselves to be over the rest'.<sup>43</sup> We note, then, that in post-apostolic times, according to Field, it was the presbyters who elected the bishop. Likewise he quotes Cyprian who says that heresies and schisms arise when 'one priest in the Church is not acknowledged for the time to be judge in Christ's stead'.<sup>44</sup> If this were not to have been so, both Jerome and Cyprian say, it would be the cause of 'as many schisms as priests'.

Field quotes Jerome's reasoning that just as 'the dumb beasts [...] have their leaders which they follow',<sup>45</sup> so also 'every Church hath her own bishop, [i.e.] her own archpresbyter, [i.e.] her own chief deacon; and all ecclesiastical order consisteth herein, that some do rule and direct the rest'.<sup>46</sup> It is striking that this appeal to natural law, employed by both Jerome and Field, forms an interesting example of a clear syllogistic argument to justify the necessity of the office of bishop; it works thus: (1) All societies, whether of men or of animals, have leaders, and (2) the company of presbyters is such a society; therefore (3) it must have leaders.<sup>47</sup> He notes his *conviction* that the office dates back to the apostles themselves, and he states his *view* that the angels of the churches in Revelation are bishops, but he nowhere *logically argues* the truth of these assumptions. Here he seems to differ somewhat from Hooker, who explicitly states that the office of bishop is *permitted* but not *obligated* by Scripture. Field himself *assumes* the office of bishop from Scripture but only *obligates* it by natural law.

This state of affairs, namely, 'in each Church, a pre-eminence of one above the rest of the presbyters', attested to from that one place in the Bible and the various church Fathers, is what 'all confess' and 'always hath been'. Thus Field appeals to unity yet again, and will do so still further, to justify his understanding of the order of bishops.

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<sup>43</sup> Field continues, 'Neither was this proper [i.e., unique] to the Church of Alexandria, but we can show the successions of bishops in all the famous Churches of the world, even from the apostles' times; and therefore all admit and allow a kind of pre-eminence of one above the rest in each Church' (5.27/III.211).

<sup>44</sup> (5.27/III.213).

<sup>45</sup> (5.27/III.212). See also: 'The best learned in our age [...] ingenuously confess it to be an essential and perpetual part of God's ordinance, for each presbytery to have a chief amongst them; the necessity whereof we may learn from all societies, both of men endued with reason, and of other things also, to which God hath denied the light of understanding', *Ibid.*

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>47</sup> See Irena Backus (ed.), *The Reception of the Church Fathers in the West*, 2 vols (Leiden: Brill, 1997), for an introduction to the indebtedness of western theologians to the work of Jerome, Cyprian, etc., in the early establishing of the church under priests and bishops. Field, together with Hooker and the other late-Elizabethan Calvinists, and together with the continental reformers, is no exception to this indebtedness.

## 8.4 – Power of Order and Power of Jurisdiction

There is no doubt but that Field ascribes a kind of ‘pre-eminence’ to the bishop, as we have seen.<sup>48</sup> He certainly has a high view of the office of bishop, even over and above an already high view of the office of presbyter. And further, this pre-eminence amounts to a power, in some sense, over the other presbyters: ‘the fathers describe unto us such a bishop as hath eminent and peerless power, without whose consent the presbyters can do nothing’. Field quotes Cyprian, Ignatius, and then Jerome, ‘the bishop must have an eminent and peerless power, or else there will be as many schisms in the Church as there are priests’. Likewise Tertullian ‘showeth, that without the bishop’s leave and consent no presbyter may baptize, minister any sacrament, or do any ministerial act’.<sup>49</sup>

We must now show just in what sense, and why, the bishops have a power the other presbyters do not have, and we turn to another assessment by Field of the meaning and importance of ministerial orders. He notes that ‘three things are implied in the calling of ecclesiastical ministers’, which he specifies as (a) their election, (b) their consecration,<sup>50</sup> giving them ‘power and authority to intermeddle<sup>51</sup> with things pertaining to the service of God’<sup>52</sup>, and (c) their assignment of a church to pastor,<sup>53</sup> which adds to the *power of order* given at consecration *the power of jurisdiction* over their flock. These important terms, the powers of order and of jurisdiction, as used by Field, we shall examine forthwith.

The first of these ‘three things’, (a) above, reasserts the high view Field has of ministerial orders, and indicates the need for careful choice, according to principles already given, of those who are thus to

<sup>48</sup> ‘[T]herefore, though they be many presbyters, that is, many fatherly guides of one Church, yet there is one amongst the rest, that is specially pastor of the place, who for distinction[s] sake, is named a bishop; to whom an eminent and peerless power is given, for the avoiding of schisms and factions; and the rest are but assistants and coadjutors, and named by the general name of Presbyters’ (3.39/i.320).

<sup>49</sup> (5.27/iii.213-4).

<sup>50</sup> Field uses terms such as ‘ordain’, ‘consecrate’ etc. somewhat interchangeably, and does not reserve them separately for the ‘ordination’ of a presbyter, and the ‘consecration’ of a bishop, as might be done today.

<sup>51</sup> Neither ‘intermeddle’ nor ‘meddle’, here or elsewhere, is (necessarily) a pejorative term in Field’s usage. They simply mean ‘concern oneself with’.

<sup>52</sup> (3.39/i.319). This is what Field means by power of order – see below.

<sup>53</sup> To quote Field in full: ‘three things are implied in the calling of ecclesiastical ministers.

1. First, an election, choice, or designment of persons fit for so high and excellent employment.
2. Secondly, the consecrating of them, and giving them ‘power and authority to intermeddle with things pertaining to the service of God’, to perform eminent acts of gracious efficacy and admirable force, tending to the procuring of the eternal good of the sons of men, and to yield unto them whom Christ hath redeemed with his most precious blood, all the comfortable means, assurances, and helps that may set forward their eternal salvation.
3. Thirdly, the assigning and dividing out to each man, thus sanctified to so excellent a work, that portion of God’s people that he is to take care of, who must be directed by him in things that pertain to the hope of eternal salvation. This particular assignation giveth to them, that had only the *power of order* before, the *power of jurisdiction* also, over the persons of men’ (3.39/i.319, italics, numbering and formatting mine).

serve. For ‘the ministry and dispensation of the Word and Sacraments [. . .] pertain only [. . .] to such as are lawfully called thereunto’.<sup>54</sup>

The second, (b) above, introduces Field’s important distinction between two powers: ‘the whole ecclesiastical power is aptly divided into the *power of order* and *jurisdiction*’.<sup>55</sup> The *power of order* is what an ordained minister has by virtue of his ordination.<sup>56</sup> Field will proceed to show, very significantly, that a bishop has no greater *power of order* than has any other presbyter, as we shall shortly see.

But (c) above shows how the *power of jurisdiction* is a separate issue. In being ordained, a presbyter, or bishop, is not only given a *power of order* by virtue of his ordination, but is also assigned a place in which to exercise his office, and correspondingly a ‘portion of God’s people’<sup>57</sup> amongst whom to exercise it. For ‘This *power [of order]* is to be exercised orderly,<sup>58</sup> and the acts of it to be performed in such sort that one disturb not another’.<sup>59</sup> What this means, and Field is about to show, is that different ministers will exercise their ministry in a particular ‘place’, and amongst their particular portion of God’s people, such that generally speaking they will not encroach upon one another’s arenas of ministry.

He shows first that the apostles, ‘though equal in the *power of order* and *jurisdiction*’,<sup>60</sup> ‘divided amongst themselves the parts and provinces of the world’, so that ‘they might not hinder one another’. The apostles then ‘divided the parts of the world converted to Christianity into several

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<sup>54</sup> (1.11/i.38).

<sup>55</sup> (3.39/i.318), italics mine. ‘The *power of holy or ecclesiastical order*, is nothing else but that power which is specially given to men sanctified and set apart from others, to perform certain sacred supernatural and eminent actions, which others of another rank may not at all, or, not ordinarily, meddle with: as, to preach the word, administer the sacraments, and the like’ (3.39/i.319, italics mine).

See also: ‘the schoolmen note that there is a two-fold *power* found in the ministers of the Church of God,

- the one of *order*,
- the other of *jurisdiction*.

The *power of order* is that whereby they are sanctified and enabled to the performance of such sacred acts as other men neither may nor can do; as is the preaching of the word, and ministration of the holy sacraments’ (5.27/iii.209, italics, bulleting and formatting mine).

<sup>56</sup> Even heretics and schismatics have a valid power of order if they have been validly ordained, according to Field, though not a valid power of jurisdiction: ‘schismatics, notwithstanding their separation, remain still conjoined with the rest of God’s people, in respect of the possession of the whole saving truth of God, all outward acts of religion and divine worship, *power of order*, and holy sacraments, which they by virtue thereof administer, and so still are and remain parts of the Church of God’ (1.13/i.42, italics mine), and (regarding heretics) ‘in respect of the profession of sundry divine verities, which still they retain in common with right believers, in respect of the *power of order* and degree of ministry, which receiving in the Church they carry out with them, and sacraments which by virtue thereof they do administer, they still pertain to the Church. But [. . .] though they have *power of order*, yet have no power of jurisdiction, neither can perform any act thereof’ (1.14/i.43, italics mine).

<sup>57</sup> (3.39/i.319).

<sup>58</sup> See the paragraph shortly below about Field’s various uses of the term ‘order’.

<sup>59</sup> (5.27/iii.209), italics mine.

<sup>60</sup> All quotations in this and the next paragraph are from (5.27/iii.209-10), italics mine.

Churches' and assigned these separate churches to their assistants and, ultimately, successors, to whom 'they so gave authority to such as they made choice of for this work, to preach, baptize, and do other acts of sacred ministry (which are to be performed by virtue of the *power of order*)'. That is, they appointed presbyters to assist and then succeed them and these presbyters each had a church 'wherein he should preach and minister sacraments'.

'This assigning of men having the *power of order*' to be presbyters over individual churches 'gave them the *power of jurisdiction*' which they had not before. Field emphasises that whereas 'the *power of order*' 'is not included within any certain bounds', the use of this *power of order* and thus the *power of jurisdiction* is limited 'within certain bounds'. Thus 'the one of these kinds of power', namely the *power of jurisdiction*, 'they have not at all without the extent of their own limits', and 'the other', namely the *power of order*, they do not have 'lawful use of' outside the bounds of their own limits. Field gives an example: if, say, a bishop should 'do any act of *jurisdiction* out of his own diocese, as to ex-communicate, absolve, or the like, all such acts are utterly void, and of no force; but if he shall do any act of the *power of order* in another man's charge, as preach or minister sacraments', then although it is an offence if he does this without consent, yet the act done is not void and of no force; for example, 'the sacraments thus ministered' are 'truly sacraments'. All this, says Field, is according to the 'resolution of the divines'.

A note on the term 'order'. Field uses the terms '*order*', '*orderly*', '*ordering*' in various ways. Use of the term will often signify ministerial *order* and *orders*, as in '*order of ministry*',<sup>61</sup> and as in the term '*power of order*'; but equally it might simply signify good *order* (and thus also discipline) in the church, as in 'power of the Church in *ordering* offenders' or 'in the ordering of sinners'.<sup>62</sup> Sometimes these uses may be close (for a prime purpose of ministerial orders is to preserve unity or discipline, or *orderliness*, in the church), or it may be somewhat unclear as to which of these meanings is intended, or both meanings may be implied,<sup>63</sup> as perhaps in 'without *order* or ministry',<sup>64</sup> or in his defining the church as 'an *orderly* multitude of right believers', but almost immediately adding there that 'it cannot be known and discerned from the conventicles of schismatics, by right faith and due use of Sacraments only, without the addition of *orderly* connexion',<sup>65</sup> by the last phrase of which he

<sup>61</sup> (1.10/i.31), italics mine.

<sup>62</sup> (1.16/i.51-2).

<sup>63</sup> Other examples already quoted elsewhere of where both meanings are intended are, '(a)mongst these fatherly guides of God's Church and people, for the preventing of dissension, the avoiding of confusion, and the more *orderly* managing of the important affairs of Almighty God, they established a most excellent, divine, and heavenly *order*, giving unto one amongst the presbyters of each Church an eminent and fatherly power, so that the rest might do nothing without him; whom for distinction's sake, and to express the honour of his degree and place, afore and above other, we name a bishop' (5.ER/III.vii, italics mine). And likewise, '(t)his power is to be exercised *orderly*, and the acts of it to be performed in such sort that one disturb not another' (5.27/III.209, italics mine).

<sup>64</sup> (1.10/i.35).

<sup>65</sup> (2.4/i.76), italics mine.

must surely mean both *order* of ministry (comparing this with his ‘notes’ of the church), but also good *orderliness* in the church. Context will usually determine the meaning (or both meanings) intended.

### 8.5 – Equality of *Power of Order*

We now proceed to show how the bishops have a higher, or wider, *power of jurisdiction* than the other presbyters, or, to use an almost equivalent term, a wider *power of exercise*, but most definitely not a higher *power of order*, in Field’s view. For in the realm of ministerial orders a bishop is still a presbyter, and thus the *power of order* possessed by a bishop is none other than, and thus no greater than, the power conferred on him by his ordination to the presbyterate. If a bishop has authority to do that which any other presbyter may not, it is because of his *power of jurisdiction/exercise*, not his *power of order*.

Regarding Field’s use of the term *power of exercise* above, we note that Field does not use the term *power of exercise* as much as the term *power of jurisdiction*. Technically, the difference, though subtle, is as follows: *power of jurisdiction* refers to the place (and thus portion of God’s people) assigned to the presbyter/bishop, within which he is to exercise his office, and carries in some sense a legal force (for example, the bishop has his diocese, the presbyter his parish); the *power of exercise* refers to the sorts of duty which the bishops may perform by virtue of their office, rather than by virtue of their assigned place, but which the presbyters may not ordinarily.<sup>66</sup>

‘Touching the pre-eminence of bishops above presbyters, there is some difference among the school-divines’,<sup>67</sup> writes Field, but he claims that ‘the best learned amongst them are of opinion, that bishops are not greater than presbyters in the *power of consecration or order*, but only in the *exercise* of it and in the *power of jurisdiction*’. That is, there’s nothing a bishop can do by *power of order* that a presbyter cannot do by *power of order* – after all, ‘presbyters may preach, and minister the greatest of all sacraments, by virtue of their consecration and order, as well as bishops’. Field quotes the opinion of Durandus that “the highest *power of consecration or order* is the power of a

<sup>66</sup> For example, ‘so far for order[s] sake is he [the bishop] preferred before the rest, that some things are specially reserved to him only, as the ordaining of such as should assist him in the work of his ministry; the reconciling of penitents; confirmation of such as were baptized, by imposition of hands; dedication of churches; and such like’ (3.39/l.320).

<sup>67</sup> All quotations until the end of this section are from (5.27/III.215-18), italics mine, unless otherwise stated.

priest or elder”, and that bishops should be chosen from among the priests “for the avoiding of the peril of schism, [...] whom the rest should obey”.<sup>68</sup>

To very similar effect Field again quotes the opinion of Jerome, who adds that the bishops are they ‘to whom some things should be peculiarly reserved’,<sup>69</sup> – for example, dedicating churches, reconciling penitents, confirming the baptised and ordaining ministers, of which the first three were reserved to the bishop “rather to honour his priestly and bishoply place, than for that these things at all may not be done by any other”; and even ordination might be carried out by presbyters ‘in cases of extreme necessity’, for example, when all bishops are either ‘extinguished by death, or, fallen into heresy’ (we shall address the question of heresy shortly). Even Stapleton<sup>70</sup> ‘seemeth to agree’!

Field quotes Bellarmine, however, as dissenting: namely that ‘the catholic Church acknowledgeth and teacheth, that the degree of bishops is greater than of presbyters by God’s law, as well in *power of order as jurisdiction*’; but Field answers to the effect that it was ‘for the avoiding of confusion and schism’ that the ‘honour of ordaining’ was reserved ‘to bishops only (unless it were in the case of extreme necessity)’, and that this power of the bishops ‘might make the ordinations of all other to be void, though equal with them in the *power of order*’. In other words, Field considers that Bellarmine is (mistakenly) declaring to be an act of *power of order* that which actually is (and has been *historically*) an act of *power of jurisdiction or exercise*.

To grasp this point about the equality of *power of order* in all presbyters (bishops and non-bishops alike) is a vital key to understanding Field’s view of the particular role of bishops, I believe, and it needs prominent and careful attention. Although Field holds bishops and their status in high esteem, their purpose and role is very specific (essentially the avoidance of schism, and thus also the preservation of order and unity); and their power, though wide, is nonetheless strictly limited. Bishops do indeed hold a high office, with an appropriate dignity and honour, and with a

<sup>68</sup> “Touching the *power of consecration or order*, it is much doubted of among divines, whether any be greater therein than an ordinary presbyter: for Hierome seemeth to have been of opinion, that the highest *power of consecration or order* is the power of a priest or elder; so that every priest, in respect of his priestly power, may minister all sacraments, confirm the baptized, give all orders, all blessings and consecrations; but that for the avoiding of the peril of schism, it was ordained that one should be chosen, who should be named a bishop, to whom the rest should obey, and to whom it was reserved to give orders, and to do some such other things as none but bishops do” (5.27/III.216, quoting Durandus, italics mine).

<sup>69</sup> ‘[A]mongst them who are equal in the *power of order*, and equally enabled to do any sacred act, the apostles (for the avoiding of schism and confusion, and the preservation of unity, peace and order) ordained that in each Church one should be before and above the rest, without whom the rest should do nothing, and to whom some things should be peculiarly reserved’ (5.27/III.216, italics mine).

<sup>70</sup> Stapleton, an ardent Romanist opponent of Field, ‘seemeth to agree, saying expressly, that [...] “In respect of sacerdotal order, and the things that pertain to order,” they are equal [...] *potestate*, though not *exercitio*; that is in power, though not in the execution of things to be done by virtue of that power: [...] bishops, who have the *power of order* in common with presbyters, [...] excel them in the execution of things to be done by virtue of that power, and in the *power of jurisdiction* also’ (5.27/III.217, italics mine, except for italicised Latin, which is original to Field).

corresponding ‘eminent and peerless power’. But this is *power of jurisdiction* and *exercise*; bishops do not have a *power of order* above or beyond that of the presbyters.

Field’s distinction between *order* and *jurisdiction*<sup>71</sup> settles the question of how many orders of ministry there are in Field’s scheme. There are two, the deacons and the presbyters, the latter including the bishops. On this understanding of *order*, bishops constitute an office, not an order. The 1662 Book of Common Prayer of the Church of England might seem not to agree with Field, in that the ordinal states in its preface that it ‘is evident unto all men diligently reading holy Scripture and ancient Authors, that from the Apostles’ time there have been these Orders of Ministers in Christ’s Church; Bishops, Priests, and Deacon. Which offices were evermore had in such reverend estimation’ (note the words ‘orders’ and ‘offices’), and it has services for the ‘The Form and Manner of Making of Deacons’ and for ‘The Form and Manner of Ordering of Priests’, and a service for the ‘The Form of Ordaining or Consecrating of an Archbishop or Bishop’.<sup>72</sup> However, the situation is not quite that simple: the 1559 Book of Common Prayer, the one familiar to Field, has the same words in the preface, but its three services are ‘The Forme and manner of Ordering of Deacons’ and ‘The forme of Ordering of Priests’ but ‘The Forme of Consecrating of an Archbishop, or Bishop’<sup>73</sup> with no use of the word ‘ordering’ here. There was probably some fluidity in the use of the term ‘order’ in Church of England usage, although for Field the term ‘power of order’ admits no flexibility. We must conclude that, nonetheless, there is precedence from before Field’s day that it was deacons and priests that were ‘ordered’ whilst bishops were ‘consecrated’, i.e., set apart for that particular office. The term ‘office’, for Field, entails the performance of the office in a servant-like manner and with a humility appropriate to it. That Field takes the view he does must surely be on account of his insistence on the validity of Church of England bishops as consecrated by presbyters, as we shall see shortly.

‘Wherefore to conclude this point’, Field writes, ‘we see that the best learned amongst the schoolmen are of opinion, that bishops are no greater than presbyters in the *power of consecration* or *order*, but only in the *exercise* of it and in the *power of jurisdiction*’; and quoting Jerome, “Therefore a presbyter and bishop are all one”;<sup>74</sup> ‘all comprehended under one common name of presbyters’.<sup>75</sup> A bishop is ‘one amongst the rest’.<sup>76</sup>

<sup>71</sup> Albeit not unique to him, as we have seen.

<sup>72</sup> The matter is certainly much debated today, but it is beyond the scope of this study to do more than observe Field’s view.

<sup>73</sup> From an edition published by Robert Barker in 1634. The 1550 edition (the first English edition, corresponding to the 1549 Book of Common Prayer), the 1552 edition, and earlier printings of the 1559 edition have corresponding wording though with different spellings.

<sup>74</sup> (5.26/III.207).

<sup>75</sup> (5.25/III.188).

<sup>76</sup> (3.39/I.320).

## 8.6 – Validity of Orders, and the Danger of Heresy

The Romanists say ‘it is easy to prove that the reformed churches are not the true churches of God’, because they do not have true succession, Field reports. ‘It can be no church that hath no ministry’,<sup>77</sup> he quotes, with obvious approval, from Jerome, and similarly from Cyprian. But, Field observes, the Romanists use these authorities to argue that because the protestants have no ministry (because ‘no lawful calling to the work of the ministry’), therefore they are not churches. Needless to say, Field disagrees with such reasoning, as follows.

‘The defects they suppose to be in the calling of our bishops and ministers are twofold:’ *first*, ‘they that ordained them [...] had no power so to do’, for, in the Romanists’ estimation, ‘No bishop may be esteemed and taken as lawfully ordained, unless he be ordained of three bishops at the least; and they, such as have been ordained in like sort; and so ascending till we come to the first’; that is, according to the Romanist view of succession – and because some of ‘our’ bishops were not thus ordained, but, in some cases, by presbyters alone, or by one bishop and presbyters, so ‘our’ bishops are not valid bishops.

On this *first* alleged defect, Field notes that even ‘Bellarmine and his fellows do not think that this number of bishops imposing hands to be absolutely and essentially necessary’ (one sometimes being sufficient with other presbyters, on this view). But fully to establish the authenticity of the English bishops, he examines ‘whether the power of ordination to be so essentially annexed to the order of bishops, that none but bishops may in any case ordain’. He concludes that even ordination of bishops by presbyters might alone be sufficient, arguing again, as we have already noted, that the principal issue is *power of order* which is equal in all presbyters.<sup>78</sup> Hence the power of ordination is proper to the presbyter, not to the bishop alone; and so consecrations of bishops by presbyters are valid acts of order, in Field’s view, and presbyters may at times confirm, absolve, and do any act of *power of order*. Supporting this, Field notes that it is understood that a presbyter who is ordained presbyter without having been a deacon, can do the work of a deacon, because of his higher order, but a

<sup>77</sup> All quotations in this section are from (3.39/i.316-18), unless otherwise specified.

<sup>78</sup> 1. ‘[T]he *power of ecclesiastical or sacred order*, that is, the power and authority to intermeddle with things pertaining to the service of God, and to perform eminent acts of gracious efficacy, tending to the procuring of the eternal good of the sons of men, is equal and the same in all those whom we call presbyters, that is, fatherly guides of God’s Church and people: and that, only for order[’s] sake [that is, good order in the church], and the preservation of peace [and thus unity], there is a limitation of the use and exercise of the same.

2. Hereunto agree all the best learned amongst the Romanists themselves, freely confessing that that wherein a bishop excelleth a presbyter, is not a distinct and higher order, or power of order, but a kind of dignity and office or employment only. [...] an eminence and dignity only, specially yielded to one above the rest, for order[’s] sake, and to preserve the unity and peace of the Church.

3. Hence it followeth, that many things which in some cases presbyters may lawfully do are peculiarly reserved unto bishops, as Hierome noteth: [...] “Rather for the honour of their ministry, than the necessity of any law” (3.39/i.321-322), italics, numbering and formatting mine.



bishop who is ordained bishop without having been ordained presbyter (a situation not without precedent) cannot do anything a presbyter can do – such a bishop cannot even preach or administer the sacraments.

Such ordinations of bishops by presbyters are not ordinarily permitted, but only in cases of necessity, such as when all the bishops are fallen into heresy. This was the situation pertaining in England at the time of the Reformation, in Field's view. For we must remember that Field addresses a situation in his own day where for half a century the Church of England has been firmly convinced that the Church of Rome is apostate, and that the protestant church in England is the true catholic church. Having written with unqualified approval of the apostles' ordering of ministry in God's church (with a presbyterate ordained to teach, guide and govern the church, and amongst the presbyterate a unity-preserving hierarchy – or '*connexion*' – of presbyters, bishops, etc.), he laments, 'This order continued in the Church from the apostles' times, and wrought excellent effects,'<sup>79</sup> until (Field writes) first the bishop of Constantinople and then the bishop of Rome began to appropriate for themselves excessive power and honour. This brought 'horrible confusion in the Christian Church, and almost the utter ruin and desolation of the same'. It is no mere hypothetical situation of heresy in the church (of Rome) which Field addresses. Thus if all the bishops turn out to be heretical, then necessity permits the remaining presbyters to consecrate bishops.<sup>80</sup> Field proceeds to show that the Fathers and schoolmen allow the force of this argument themselves, and that the practice of the Roman church in sundry ways has allowed it too.

On the *second* of the alleged defects 'in the calling of our bishops and ministers' referred to above, namely that 'no man may be ordained but into a void place', and thus that 'our first ministers [...] had no lawful ordination, because they were not ordained and placed in void places, but intruded into Churches that had lawful bishops at the time of those pretended ordinations', Field answers 'that the Church is left void, either by death, resignation, deprivation, or the people's desertion and forsaking of him that did precede', the last of these being the case in point here with the Reformed churches, in that 'the people, or at least that part of the people that adhered to the Catholic verity,

<sup>79</sup> (5.ER/III.viii), likewise the next quotation.

<sup>80</sup> 'If they [the bishops] become enemies to God and true religion, in case of such necessity as the care and government of the Church is devolved to the presbyters remaining Catholic and being of better spirit, so the duty of ordaining such as to assist or succeed them in the work of the ministry pertains to them likewise. For if the *power of order* and authority to intermeddle in things pertaining to God's service be the same in all presbyters, and that they be limited in the execution of it only for order[s] sake, so that in case of necessity every of them may baptize and confirm them whom they have baptized, absolve and reconcile penitents, and do all those other acts which regularly are appropriated unto the bishop alone; there is no reason to be given, but that in case of necessity, wherein all bishops were extinguished by death, or, being fallen into heresy, should refuse to ordain any to serve God in his true worship, but that presbyters, as they may do all other acts, whatsoever challenge bishops in ordinary course make upon them, might do this also' (3.39/1.323, italics mine).

who have power to choose their pastor, to admit the worthy, and refuse the unworthy, did forsake the former that were wolves<sup>81</sup> and not pastors, and submitted themselves to those of a better spirit’.

In justification of this, Field cites the precedent of Cyprian *et al.*, who once had occasion to encourage the ‘people of the Churches in Spain’ to separate themselves from idolatrous bishops who had denied the faith under persecution, assuring them that generally speaking holy and God-fearing people ‘may and ought to separate themselves from impious and wicked bishops’; and the precedent also of Athanasius who virtually alone remained untainted by Arianism.<sup>82</sup> He concludes, quoting Ockham, ‘If the pope and principal bishops of the Christian world do fall into heresy, the power of ecclesiastical judgment is devolved to the inferior clergy, and people, remaining Catholic’.<sup>83</sup>

Field considers, in fact, that ‘there is, and always hath been, a visible Church, and that not consisting of some few scattered Christians without order or ministry, or use of sacraments’, though he notes that ‘some few have been of opinion, that though all others failing from the faith, the truth of God should remain only in some few of the laity, yet the promise of Christ concerning the perpetuity of his Church might still be verified’.<sup>84</sup>

Field is clear, therefore, that the possibility of the bishops, or some of them, falling into heresy is not a mere academic point – it has happened on various occasions, and most pertinently in the late medieval Church of Rome. It is precisely the apostasy of the papal see that provides Field with his ratification of the Church of England’s bishops and ministry. One suspects he would admit the possibility that a similar situation, on whatever scale, could hypothetically happen again.

### 8.7 – First Among Equals – a High Dignity of Office, but not a Princely Power

The dignity of office of the bishop is real, and to be acknowledged; bishops are to be obeyed and respected for their role in the church. However, Field is cautious in his use of terminology, qualifying it where necessary. Earlier, for example, we noted his conclusion that ‘therefore all admit and allow a

<sup>81</sup> A biblical metaphor, found in, e.g., Matthew 7:15 and Acts 20:29.

<sup>82</sup> ‘[S]ometimes errors and heresies so much prevail, that the most part [...] even of them also that hold and possess great places of office and dignity in the Church of God, either for fear, flattery, hope of gain, or honour, or else misled through simplicity, or directly falling into error or heresy, depart from the soundness of Christian faith [...] This was the state of the Christian world in the time of Athanasius, when [...] all the bishops of the whole world (carried away with the sway of time [Arianism]) fell from the soundness of the faith, only Athanasius excepted, and some few confessors’ (1.10/l.33).

<sup>83</sup> ‘For if it do fall out, that the bishops and a great part of the people do fall into error, heresy, and superstition, [...] the rest are bound to maintain and uphold the ancient verity; who being not so many nor so mighty as to be able to eject those wicked ones by a formal course of judicial proceeding, what other thing is there left unto them, but [...] to separate themselves, which is the thing our adversaries except against in the people of our time. Now having separated themselves from their former supposed and pretended pastors, what remaineth but that they make choice of new to be ordained and set over them’ (3.39/l.326).

<sup>84</sup> (1.10/l.35), and the immediately preceding quotation.

*kind of pre-eminence of one above the rest in each Church*<sup>85</sup> – not an absolute pre-eminence, but one strictly limited in scope: Field consistently avoids implications of princely status. ‘Yet on the other side, we make not the power of bishops to be princely, as Bellarmine doth, but fatherly: so that as the presbyters may do nothing without the bishop, so he may do nothing in matters of greatest moment and consequence without their presence and advice’. And he cites the council of Carthage as having voided ‘all sentences of bishops which the presence of their clergy confirmeth not’.

Also (again against Bellarmine) presbyters themselves do have a real power of jurisdiction alongside the bishops, and in support of this he notes that presbyters were present at all synods and councils except general councils, and even in these the bishops brought the ‘resolution and consent of the provincial synods of those Churches from whence they came, in which synods presbyters had their voices, [...] and nothing was passed in them without their concurrence’. Field continues this theme by observing that in resolution of differences between a bishop and his presbyters ‘a certain number of presbyters also out of each Church’ as well as other bishops were to be involved at provincial synod level, and in any case ‘no sentence of the bishop was of force’ ‘without the concurrence of his own clergy’ even in the ‘causes of other inferior clergymen’. It is such a procedure as this that properly guards against ‘any breach in the Christian Churches’,<sup>86</sup> and against fear of ‘any wrong, injustice, or sinister proceedings in the hearing of causes, and determining of controversies’,<sup>87</sup> with the hierarchical structure within the presbyterate allowing for various kinds of appeal to higher levels, and with appeal to a general council as a final resort. Thus in Field’s view the bishops, either individually or as a collective body, have neither existence nor operation independent of the presbyters.

So as we conclude, we recall that Field’s overarching view of ministerial orders is that they were established by the apostles in the divine will to teach, guide, guard and govern God’s church in the ways of the apostolic Christian truth – antiquity of truth, succession of truth, unity of truth, universality of truth and catholicity of truth. Field has set out ‘to speak of the diverse degrees of honour and pre-eminence found amongst’ those who ‘were appointed to teach and govern the people of God’.<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> All quotations in this and the next paragraph are from (5.27/III.212-15), italics mine, unless specified otherwise.

<sup>86</sup> (5.ER/III.vii).

<sup>87</sup> (5.ER/III.viii).

<sup>88</sup> (5.27/III.209).

Thus were things moderated in the primitive ages of the Church; and though bishops have power over presbyters, yet was it so limited, that there was nothing bitter or grievous in it, nothing but that which was full of sweetness and content.<sup>89</sup>

### Conclusion of Section 2 of this study

We have surveyed a portion of Field's work, arguing that in some respects at least, such as in his particular set of three notes of the church, and in his insistence that the Church of Rome had always maintained in the writings of at least 'the best learned' of its medieval spokesmen all the essential doctrines of protestantism, his scholarship is sufficiently distinctive to merit attention. We have also looked, briefly, at a major historian, Paul Avis, whose conclusions concerning Field are (we have argued) sharp but, nonetheless, were flawed in some important ways until his recent revision. In these ways, then, we have sought to argue that Field is a figure of real importance and is in need of reconsideration and re-assessment.

Thus it would be of profit to reach, if possible, some tentative conclusions as to why Field is, and long has been, so relatively unknown. To compare, and contrast, Field with Hooker, would be a task of some profit, I believe, as in some, but not all, respects they are remarkably similar. With considerable similarity in personality and contemporary popularity; background and education; exceptional academic ability and studiousness; in their stations in life and in their family life; their early deaths before their work was properly completed; in the logical rigour and unashamed polemic of their published works in defence of the Church of England; in their theological learning and leaning; and in their scholarly acclaim and renown: we must wonder how it has come about that Hooker has been continually championed ever since, Field hardly at all. Certainly nothing we encounter in a comparison of these two churchmen points to any justifiable reason for Field to continue to be neglected, it seems to me, at least in terms of their comparable academic prowess and reputations.

Field was, arguably, the (perhaps slightly) more brilliant of the two intellectually, his learning the greater, his academic achievement the higher (DD as against BD), which fact perhaps would render Field the more likely to remain of renown. Further, Field's writing style is somewhat more accessible than Hooker's, too, with (on average) shorter sentences and fewer nested subordinate clauses. Even in his own day Hooker's writing style was complained about, even by his friend and collaborator, George Cranmer, who advised him, 'I could wishe for more perspicuity [...] in your booke'.<sup>90</sup> And the authors of *A Christian Letter*, a late sixteenth century analysis and critique of Hooker's *Lawes of Ecclesiastical Politie* remarked that 'your bookes bee so long and tedious, in a style not usuall [...] the

<sup>89</sup> (5.27/III.215).

<sup>90</sup> Hooker, *Lawes*, Folger Library Edition, III, 112.

like harde to be found, farre differing from the simplicitie of holie Scripture'.<sup>91</sup> Modern readers tend to find Hooker even more difficult to read, at least from his book 2 onwards. By contrast, Field is, comparatively, remarkably easy to read.<sup>92</sup> Any conclusions as to why Hooker is so well known, and Field so little, would be at best very tentative, unless research can uncover some definitive reasons beyond what I have found, and would involve a considerable but valuable project for further study and research.

There are four possible but very provisional explanations for the difference in renown between these two churchmen that I would like to offer by way of conclusion, simply for the reason of indicating a possible and profitable way forward for further research. The first is to do with patronage. Hooker's patron, at least initially, if such can be narrowed down to a single individual, was Archbishop Whitgift – a churchman. Following Hooker's first sermon delivered at St Paul's Cross, Whitgift, suitably impressed, appointed him as master of the Temple, and this appointment thrust Hooker into the limelight, as I shall note shortly. Subsequently, Isaac Walton wrote his well-known biography of Hooker, which, though its accuracy concerning the family of Hooker's wife, the Churchman family, has been challenged,<sup>93</sup> furthered the reputation of Hooker himself.

No-one in Field's lifetime was his patron in quite the same way. Field dedicated his work to archbishop Bancroft, but there seems to be no evidence he patronised Field at all. If anything Bancroft was preoccupied not with Field's concern, the incipient resurgence of papism, but with nonconformism, and this perhaps (arguably) more ardently than Whitgift. The Lincoln's Inn benchers Richard Kingsmill had secured the Burghclere appointment for Field, having witnessed Field's tenure of the Lincoln's Inn lectureship, but this rural appointment kept Field somewhat in obscurity. Although he was offered the Holborn living in London, Field declined this, preferring the quiet of the country for the better pursuit of his studies. Eventually Field was given the appointment of prebend at Windsor, and he became known in court circles, where it is known he was, or at least had been, on generally good terms with King James,<sup>94</sup> and was certainly well known and admired generally, as we have shown. But neither royal patronage, nor the royal Windsor appointment, although both a prestigious honour, brought him any wide public or ecclesiastical renown. We also know of at least once instance when the king seemingly turned against Field (in 1610, on the publication of Field's

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<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, IV, 71.

<sup>92</sup> Provided the reader can concentrate throughout some fairly lengthy (but well-constructed) sentences. I myself at least find Field the easier of the two scholars to read.

<sup>93</sup> E.g. by Philip Secor, Hooker's more recent biographer.

<sup>94</sup> See later in this study for an analysis of James' response to Field (where we see some, not necessarily reliable, evidence that Field's Book 5 angered James).

Book 5), and in any case we also know that despite his admiration for Field the king himself acknowledged that he ‘should have done more for that man.’

The second reason is to do with public notoriety. At the Temple, Hooker was launched into his well-known public debate with Travers. But Field’s notoriety, such as it was, was more in court circles, and within the rarefied atmosphere of St George’s Windsor. James’ patronage of Field was in the arena of court life and fraternal discussion occasioned there; Whitgift’s of Hooker was in more public circles of ecclesiastical debate.

Added to which is our third reason, namely that Field’s and Hooker’s antagonists were in very different theological and ecclesiastical camps. The pressing ecclesiastical issue of the turn of the century was, arguably, that of incipient nonconformism – Hooker’s debate. The issue of Rome – Field’s debate – would become pressing again during the seventeenth century, but as James came to the throne it was Hooker’s arena that occupied the attention of court and church alike; it was arguably presbyterianism that more threatened the Elizabethan settlement in 1603, not Douay. The Hampton Court conference was held in response to the millenary petition sent to James by clergy of nonconformist inclinations, and the two camps were these and the churchmen. It was not a debate about the objections of Rome to the Church of England. Travers was the more publicly notorious opponent of Hooker than Bellarmine of Field, at least in terms of the disquiet entailed. Bellarmine, Field’s principal opponent, was Italian, operating on the continent and writing books in Latin such as his *Disputationes*, very few of which have appeared in English until the present day.<sup>95</sup> Field was responding to these, but hardly in public. Travers *versus* Hooker was very public. Archbishop Whitgift had been exercised in the debate with Thomas Cartwright, spokesman for the presbyterian cause, and his successor Bancroft likewise found presbyterianism a pressing concern.

We concede that in the seventeenth century, after Field’s death, the issue of Rome did continue to be debated. One example, mentioned above in chapter 2, is the publication in 1628 of Joseph Hall’s *The Olde Religion*,<sup>96</sup> in which he argued that in some sense the Church of Rome could be considered a true church at least in the sense of its visible public profession. As is well known, this proved to be the occasion of a heated controversy. Hall does refer to Field’s writings, alongside those of many other contemporary writers, but this and other examples of references to Field are relatively minimal.

<sup>95</sup> As at time of writing, Bellarmine’s *Disputationes de Controversiis Christianae Fidei* is undergoing a new translation project, and I am indebted to the newly translated ‘Marks of the Church’ section in the ‘On Councils and Churches’ volume, Robert Bellarmine, *On the Marks of the Church*, tr. by Ryan Grant (Mediatrix Press, 2015).

<sup>96</sup> In *The Works of Joseph Hall, D.D.*, ed. by P. Wynter (Oxford: 1863), viii, 631-718.

The fourth reason for the relative neglect of Field compared with Hooker is these two theologians' publishing record. So far as I know Hooker has never been out of print. Leaving aside the question of his posthumously published Books 6-8 and their disputed provenance, it remains the case that whatever the truth of that matter there were those, such as Andrewes, who preserved those manuscripts thinking them to be Hooker's, and thus thinking them worthy of publication. We cannot escape the conclusion that Hooker in his lifetime, and soon after his death, and ever since, was held in such high public esteem that the honour of his name has been preserved continuously unchallenged, notwithstanding some critical assessment of his writings and influence.

In contrast, Field was republished twice by his admiring son, Nathaniel, in 1628 and 1635 (and then not again until the nineteenth century), but there's no evidence that those republications had any impact (save for one slight negative impact which is beyond the scope of this study to analyse), nor that anyone else sought to take up Nathaniel's baton and commend Field's work to a wider audience (again, until the nineteenth century). Even then, the EHS publication of 1847-52 may have failed to do much to re-establish Field, owing to the Ecclesiastical History Society itself being ill-fated and the subject of some scandal.

Contrasting Field with Hooker, however, in their respective public acclaim or place in the scholarly domain has not been the prime purpose of the current study – rather, my intention has been to submit a provisional case for Field to be given greater prominence in the academic arena. Our thesis is that for whatever reason Field has been so relatively overlooked, save by a few, it would be a worthy cause for him to have a greater voice in modern scholarly debate.

By means of this order established by the apostles of Christ among the guides of God's people, and received and allowed by the first and primitive Christians, unity was preserved, the parts of the Church holden fast together, in a band of concordant agreement; questions determined, doubts cleared, differences composed, and causes advisedly and deliberately heard, with all indifferency and equity.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> (5.ER/III.vii).

## **‘A Field the Lord hath Blessed’**

### **Section 3. Chapters 9-12: Field’s Contemporary and Later Reception**

This final **Section 3** assesses Field’s reception in his own day, and then takes a sample of latter scholars from the nineteenth to the twenty-first centuries.

**Chapter 9** focusses on King James for whom Field was a chaplain in ordinary, and examines one particular incident in relation to the Roman Catholic community.

**Chapter 10** examines one reaction against Field from a recusant Roman Catholic, and Field’s counter-defence in which he invokes a proto-reformer from Catholic France.

**Chapter 11** continues the third section, by taking a sample of three more modern writers who have all valued Field, one from each of the nineteenth, twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

**Chapter 12**, the **Conclusion**, concludes the section and the study. My final conclusion is that Field is of sufficient worth to be given enhanced notice in our day.



## Chapter 9

### – King James: for or against Field? –

#### 9. Abstract of this chapter

Against the plethora of favourable reaction to Field in his day, there was on one occasion a negative response, from none other than the king, as alleged from within the then recusant community under the archpriest Birkhead. In this chapter I observe how we know of this from extant manuscript archives, and assess the likelihood of its veracity. In the process I assess also James' constancy as to his position *vis-à-vis* the protestants and Roman Catholics, as commented upon in his own time. Into the fray I bring the two Arians burnt during James' reign, and Vorstius, and also the incipient rise of Laud in relation to the 'low-value' deanery of Gloucester. We meet the king's faithful attendant James Montagu in this chapter too. In the ensuing discussion, it is inevitable that we revisit and note the influence of the polemical invective which was the norm of the age. Field's principal thesis regarding where orthodoxy was, and is now, found overarches the discussion in this chapter.

#### 9.1 The testimony of George Birkhead, recusant 'archpriest', 23 April 1610

The bish. of<sup>[1]</sup> bath and wells [James Montagu] shewed of late a new booke to the kinge of D feildes.<sup>[2]</sup> the k bad him read it. and after he had hard him read a while, he interrupted him, and shewed great dislike of the manner of feild his writinge, saing it was bitter, nothinge but words *etcetera*, and asked yf he had no proofes. the b replied that the proofes followed. read them, said the kinge. and after the b had read a while the k staied him, and shewed great dislike and Contempt of the proofes: sainge that they were but Cavills, sophisms *etcetera* and that he did not like that men should handle matter rather with Cunninge then good learninge, and after further readinge the k tooke the booke, and threw it on the ground in a great angre, and spake wordes which were not to be disliked, as he hath don at other several tymes.<sup>3</sup>

Against the overwhelming evidence for the good esteem in which Field was generally held by his peers in the circles in which he moved, and subsequently – including (generally) by the king – and

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<sup>1</sup> Underlining and italics in all quotations from these newsletters are, on Questier's testimony, all faithful reproductions of the original newsletter holographs. (Questier, xi). References to 'Questier' in this chapter refer to Michael Questier (ed.), *Newsletters from the Archpresbyterate of George Birkhead*, Camden Fifth Series, vol. xii (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press for the Royal Historical Society, 1998).

<sup>2</sup> Questier references this book as 'Richard Field, *Of the Church. Five Bookes* (1606-10)', Questier, 78, footnote 237. This is not entirely accurate – see later in this section.

<sup>3</sup> Questier, 78.

leaving aside several attacks upon his writings from English recusants,<sup>4</sup> we have just one reported negative reaction to Field, and that from King James himself.<sup>5</sup> This is found in a report by archpriest George Birkhead<sup>6</sup> concerning James' ill-feeling expressed towards Field's Book 5-with-appendix shortly after it was published. The report is contained in a newsletter, written by Birkhead on 23 April 1610,<sup>7</sup> found in a 1998 Royal Historical Society collection, edited by Michael Questier, of newsletters sent from the archpresbyterate of Birkhead to Rome.<sup>8</sup> The report, a small portion of the newsletter towards its end,<sup>9</sup> reads as above.<sup>10</sup> The incident is not referred to in any biography of Field until the *ODNB* one.

George Birkhead was sent to the English Mission in 1580, where 'we are told that he was "well esteemed by all parties"<sup>[11]</sup> upon account of his peaceable and reconciling temper"<sup>12</sup>. He was nominated archpriest of England by Pope Paul V on 22 January 1608, in succession to George Blackwell<sup>13</sup> who 'had been deposed in consequence of his acceptance of the oath of allegiance'<sup>14</sup> to King James. Holding this dignity until his death Birkhead 'was admonished to dissuade catholics from taking the oath and frequenting the protestant worship' (*State Papers, Domestic, James I, vol. xxxi*).<sup>15</sup> It seems unlikely that Birkhead himself was present during this alleged incident because the account, transcribed above, does not read as that of a first-hand observer – it is a report of a report. And later

<sup>4</sup> We examine this elsewhere in this study.

<sup>5</sup> There is also one piece of circumstantial evidence which could *possibly* indicate King James' disapproval, and I shall consider this at the end of this section.

<sup>6</sup> George Birkhead (b. in Durham c.1549-1553, d. 6 April 1614), English College, Douai 1575, ordained priest 6 April 1577, English College at Rome 1578-1580, English Mission 1580, archpriest of England 1608. Name sometimes spelled Birket. Sometime aliases: Hall, Lambton, Salvin.

<sup>7</sup> 'George Salvin (Birkhead) to Richard Baker (Smith) (23 April 1610) (AAW A [Archives of the Archdiocese of Westminster, A Series] ix, no. 35, pp. 91-4 Holograph)' (Questier, 75). This is newsletter no. 9 in the Questier collection, 75-79.

<sup>8</sup> *Newsletters from the Archpresbyterate of George Birkhead*, ed. by Michael Questier, Camden Fifth Series, vol. 12 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press for the Royal Historical Society, 1998). This volume is a selection of newsletters 'bound in volumes VIII to XIII of the 'Series A', an important section of the records of the English Catholic secular clergy kept in the archives of Westminster Cathedral.' (See Questier, ix). Questier writes: 'This book [...] contains edited transcripts of a selection of the newsletters written by the Catholic secular priests in England, France and Belgium to their agents in Rome between 1609 and 1614.' (See Questier, 1).

<sup>9</sup> Questier, *Newsletters*, 78-79.

<sup>10</sup> Kenneth Fincham refers to this incident, and to Nathaniel Field's report (*Memorials*, 15) that James liked to 'discourse with [Field] about points of divinitie', in his *Prelate as Pastor, the Episcopate of James I* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 24.

<sup>11</sup> This would mean all recusant parties, as there was as much dissension amongst these as between the various protestant parties, and many English recusants complained that Rome did not adequately support them.

<sup>12</sup> *DNB*, article on Birkhead.

<sup>13</sup> George Blackwell, c.1545-1613), English College Douai 1574, catholic priest 1575, English mission 1576, archpriest 1597-1607, imprisoned (for life) 1607, but controversially (within the recusant community) accepted King James' oath of allegiance 1607.

<sup>14</sup> *DNB*, article on Birkhead.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

in the newsletter Birkhead says of the reports he is conveying: ‘thus much hath ben written to me by some of good intelligence.’

Quite understandably, the recusants were quick to take any opportunity to read into words and actions of the king an attitude favourable towards Romanism. In another newsletter<sup>16</sup> the writer reports favourably of James: ‘And as the K said in the Conference at Hampton Court no Bishops no King’ (this being a well-known adage of the monarch). Perhaps the writer sees this as evidence of the king’s sympathy for the dependence of the monarch on the church – a Romanist would be pleased to note this. But actually, I suggest it rather reflects the king’s insistence that a monarch, created as such by divine decree and, accordingly, through the ministry of the church, has thereby divine decree to rule absolutely. This being the case, the writer’s optimism is misled, for James is well known never to have shifted his view of the divine right of kings – who cannot, therefore, be deposed by the pope or by any church authority. James’ *Oath of Allegiance* of 22 June 1606 (following the gunpowder plot of 1605), and his defence of it in his *Apologie* of 1607 against Pope Paul V and Cardinal Bellarmine,<sup>17</sup> and his further defence in his *Premonition* of 1609,<sup>18</sup> all witness to this.<sup>19</sup>

In the same newsletter from which our negative report about Field is taken,<sup>20</sup> Birkhead reports the king defending a ‘one D [Richard] Butler’ who ‘made a sermon before the k of Late’,<sup>21</sup> against the detractions of Lord Edward Zouche, ‘till they grew somewhat warme’. Butler, of whom it had been said by Richard Bancroft (the archbishop of Canterbury) that one ‘should not find an heyrebreath betwene [him] and a papist’, had preached ‘against justification by onely faith, and provinge workes of penance and namely satisfaction to god’. If the report is to be believed the sermon created a stir (‘ther was much speech therof’).<sup>22</sup>

Questier notes<sup>23</sup> that recusant priests of the period following the publication of James’ *Premonition*<sup>24</sup> (i.e. in 1609 and subsequently) ‘had even taken comfort in 1609 from James’

<sup>16</sup> No. 23 in the same 1998 Royal Historical Society collection, Questier, 139, written by ‘Richard Orontes (Smith) to Thomas More (13 March 1612 [. . .]) (AAW A XI, no. 39, pp. 103-4. Holograph)’.

<sup>17</sup> King James I of England, *Triplici nodo, triplex cuneus. OR An Apologie for the Oath of Allegiance, Against the two Breves of Pope Paulus Quintus, and the late letter of Cardinal Bellarmine to G. Blackwel the Arch-priest* (London: Robert Barker, Printer to the Kings most Excellent Majestie. Anno 1607). This 1607 edition was published without acknowledgement of King James’ authorship.

<sup>18</sup> Published 1609 together with a reprint of 1607 *Apologie*.

<sup>19</sup> The key wording from clause 4 of the oath is: ‘the pope neither of himself nor by any authority of Church or See of Rome, or by any other means with any other, has any power to depose the king’.

<sup>20</sup> No. 9 in the collection ‘AAW A IX, no. 35, pp. 91-4 Holograph’, Questier, 79.

<sup>21</sup> Questier, *Newsletters*, 79. Likewise remaining quotations in this paragraph.

<sup>22</sup> I comment shortly below on James’ apparent defence of Roman Catholic doctrine.

<sup>23</sup> Questier, *Newsletters*, 21.

<sup>24</sup> King James I of England, *An Apologie for the Oath of Allegiance [. . .] Together with a Premonition of his Majesties, to all most Mightie Monarches, Kings, free Princes and States of Christendome* (London: 1609).

“Premonition” where he, as [the recusant] William Bishop said, “in the end” adds “this remarkable clause, that he is and ever wilbe of that faith and religion that [was]<sup>[25]</sup> taught & received for the first four or five hu[n]dred yeres after Christ. he acknowledgeth his holiness to be one of the first four patriarches of the church [. . .]”.<sup>26</sup> Questier notes that such an optimism seems incompatible ‘with another principle of his [i.e. of James], that the pope is the Antichrist’, quoting Bishop as having said this.<sup>27</sup>

Additionally, Questier remarks in a footnote<sup>28</sup> that James had proclaimed ‘that his concern was to uphold religious orthodoxy’ – which is in line with James’ ‘remarkable clause’ as quoted by Bishop above – and that the recusant commentators ‘concentrated primarily on’ this ‘announcement’ of James. Presumably Questier means that they based their optimism on this. That the recusants entertained some optimism that the king could possibly be won round eventually to at least an accommodation to their faith might at first sight indeed seem ‘remarkable’, in the light of the king’s known rejection of medieval and contemporary Romanism. Nonetheless, Questier subsequently writes: ‘There was, it seemed to the more optimistic priests, the chance that James’s rage for orthodoxy might at some point become combined with a more moderate attitude towards Rome and Catholicism.’<sup>29</sup> The question arises: Did the recusants, and does Questier, understand how James and/or the protestants conceived the orthodoxy of ‘the first four or five hu[n]dred yeres after Christ’? What ‘orthodoxy’ was James so keen to uphold?

### 9.1.1 Note on the term ‘antichrist’

The appearance of this term above is the first in this study, and is worth a brief note. ‘Antichrist’ is indubitably a highly pejorative term, even abusive; at least measured by today’s standards. But employing the term ‘antichrist’ was exceedingly common amongst protestants of the post-Reformation era. A multitude of protestant divines regularly called the pope antichrist. Christopher Hill, in chapter 1, ‘Before 1640: The Roman Antichrist’, of his *Antichrist in Seventeenth-Century England*,<sup>30</sup> records dozens of divines, courtiers and other worthies from Jacobean, Elizabethan and earlier times, including Grosseteste (Field’s ‘Grosthead’), Luther, Jewel, Whitgift and Hooker, even

<sup>25</sup> These brackets and the next pair (‘[was]’ and ‘[n]’) are Questier’s.

<sup>26</sup> Quoted in *Archives of the Archdiocese of Westminster*, Series A, VIII, no. 138. See also P. Milward, *Religious Controversies of the Jacobean Age: a survey of printed sources* (London: Scolar Press, 1978), 92.

<sup>27</sup> Questier, *Newsletters*, 22.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 22, footnote 117.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 23.

<sup>30</sup> Christopher Hill, *Antichrist in Seventeenth-Century England* (London [sic]: Oxford University Press, 1971), 1-40. Amongst those Hill notes are Wyclif, Hus, Grosseteste; Luther, Calvin, and their followers; Robert Barnes, John Frith, Tyndale, Cranmer, Latimer, Ridley, Hooper, John Bradford; Jewel, many other Elizabethan bishops, Whitgift (e.g. in his DD thesis), Duplessis-Mornay, John Field; Barrow, Browne, Penry; Burghley, Spenser, Donne, Herbert, Milton; James I, George Abbot, Robert Abbot, Usher, Morton, Carleton, Joseph Hall, Bilson, Richard Montagu, Hooker.

King James, as explicitly declaring the pope to be antichrist – but he doesn't list Field. Hill notes King James as having been 'claimed as the first monarch publicly to denounce the pope as Antichrist';<sup>31</sup> However, it is known that Edward VI had written 'A Small Treatise against the Primacy of the Pope', in which he explicitly describes the pope as antichrist ('The fifth [vial] is our Anti-Christ the Pope').<sup>32</sup>

The papal faction of the Church of Rome was frequently referred to in this era as 'antichristian', or as the 'antichrist', or as the 'synagogue of Satan' or the like. Field himself certainly, and regularly, denotes the Roman church as antichristian or as antichrist; for example, the very last words of all his published works say of the Tridentine Church of Rome that

she is an erring, heretical, and apostatical church; that she hath forsaken her first faith, departed from her primitive sincerity, plunged those that adhere unto her into many gross and damnable errors, and defiled herself with intolerable superstition and idolatry, so that as well in respect of her errors in faith, superstition and idolatry in divine worship; as of her slanderous, treacherous, bloody, and most horrible and hellish practices, to overthrow and destroy all that do but open their mouths against her abominations, we may justly account her to be the synagogue of Satan, the faction of antichrist, and that Babylon out of which we must fly, unless we will be partakers of her plagues.<sup>33</sup>

This is, of course, very strong and harsh language, not atypical of Field's age, but language which today would be intolerable. We abjure such strength of feeling today. But nonetheless, it is language that was unsparingly employed back then. This study records such usage without prejudice, simply as a fact of history.

However, although the terms 'antichrist' and 'antichristian' appear over 70 times in *Of the Church*, Field himself, unlike many of his contemporaries, generally does not call the pope 'antichrist' explicitly. In fact, I have only found two such unequivocal instances, in his Book 5: 'the pope [...] is that antichrist that sitteth in the temple of God, as if he were God,'<sup>34</sup> and in his final appendix against Higgons, 'the pope [...] that antichrist'.<sup>35</sup> In all other cases Field's use of the term can be construed as applying to the Church of Rome itself, and not necessarily explicitly to the pope, or to refer to another's such denomination. An interesting example of Field quoting another's use of the term 'antichrist' is in respect of the proto-reformer Robert Grossthead, bishop of Lincoln in the time of Hildebrand, Pope Gregory VII, whom Field notes as having been called 'antichrist' by the bishop,

<sup>31</sup> *Antichrist in Seventeenth-Century England*, 20.

<sup>32</sup> King Edward VI, *K. Edward the VIth his own arguments against the Pope's supremacy* (London: 1682), 90.

<sup>33</sup> (5App.Pt3/iv.572).

<sup>34</sup> (5.46/iii.547).

<sup>35</sup> (5App.Pt1/iv.384).

some centuries before the Reformation.<sup>36</sup> Nonetheless, Field's strength of feeling about the papal faction of the Church of Rome is clear, and he is not shy to use the term 'antichrist' of it.

## 9.2 Where was, and is, orthodoxy found? – Field's principal thesis

The recusants were, of course, adamant in their belief that the Church of Rome was in direct continuation with the early church – both in its succession of bishops, and doctrinally. It is not surprising, therefore, that a statement from the king, known as being vehemently anti-Rome, as to his committed adherence to the early faith should have seemed 'remarkable' to the recusants. But it would not have seemed at all remarkable to the protestants of the time; for it was their contention, and particularly Field's (as noted elsewhere in this study), that the doctrine of the Church of Rome had long since departed from the original faith handed down by the apostles, and that it was the protestants who had recovered the latter and were in continuation with it.<sup>37</sup> Further, the protestants were entirely happy with the dogma of the legitimacy, and even the primacy, of the See of Rome and its popes *in theory* (albeit not in their actual manifestation in later papism, as the protestants were wont to call it).

It is the objective of this current study to show how Field was a committed defender of this very notion that it is 'they of the Romish faction'<sup>38</sup> who have long since departed from 'the faith of our fathers',<sup>39</sup> and how Field further demonstrates that there have been defenders of all the essential doctrines of protestantism amongst the scholars of the Latin church continuously down through the ages. So indeed, in his view, it is the protestant church which is in direct continuation with the church of the fathers, not only doctrinally, but also historically *within* historic Catholicism – albeit not within the corrupt papist faction as the protestants conceived it. Field argues that in many cases it cannot be determined exactly when the various erroneous doctrines crept into the beliefs and practices of the Latin church, but he is clear (as is James) that, in the early centuries, the church of the fathers was characterised in substance, if not then by name, by 'protestant' orthodoxy. It is entirely consistent with the protestant view that James was committed to uphold and defend the faith of the early church and also to uphold the legitimacy of the pope as an ideal which once did pertain – though not now, and not for long ages since. When William Bishop states 'his holiness to be one of the first four patriarches of the church' (as quoted above), it is reasonable to surmise that he has mistaken James' intended meaning (that the pope – as patriarch of the western church *in theory*, and

<sup>36</sup> 'Thus we see how zealously Grosthead, the worthy and renowned bishop of Lincoln, opposed himself against the tyrannical usurpations and encroachments of the pope, and feared not to call him antichrist', (5App.Pt1/iv.387).

<sup>37</sup> '[W]e have not departed from the church wherein our Fathers lived and died' (5.App.Pt3.II/iv.520/1628.880).

<sup>38</sup> (3App/II.5).

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

*in actuality in ancient times* – should be regarded as having primacy) for the untenable suggestion that the *current* pope, who is ‘antichrist’ in James’ view, should therefore be accorded primacy. James should be construed as implying: ‘I defend and uphold the faith of the fathers – and therefore I am protestant’, not ‘and therefore I am sympathetically disposed towards Tridentine Roman Catholicism’.

In the light of this, and of James’ seemingly general high regard for Field, it is perhaps surprising to us to find this report amongst the newsletters of archpriest George Birkhead suggesting that James, on one occasion, took exception to the written work of Field. Questier notes<sup>40</sup> that ‘James constantly reworked his pose as a defender of orthodoxy, for example, as the priests carefully noted, in his reported pronouncements against writers such as Richard Field,<sup>[41]</sup> his campaign against Vorstius, and the prosecution of the English Arians Bartholomew Legate and Edward Wightman.’ Questier in a footnote here<sup>42</sup> remarks that James proclaimed ‘that his concern was to uphold religious orthodoxy’, which, Questier opines, ‘did not have to be seen as simply a Protestant orthodoxy’, and that the recusant commentators ‘concentrated primarily on’ this announcement of James.

But Field cannot so simply be put into the same category as these Arians, who were burnt in 1612<sup>43</sup> for the anti-Nicene Arian heresy, apparently with royal approval.<sup>44</sup> The renowned contemporary letter-writer John Chamberlain wrote: ‘the King says yf he [Legate] be so desperate to denie Christ to be God he will adventure to burne him with a good conscience’.<sup>45</sup> Nor can Field be put into the same category as Vorstius<sup>46</sup> who, on the continent, had been perceived to have embraced the Arminian theology of the remonstrants (especially after his publication of three theological works in 1597),<sup>47</sup> and who came under the direct censure of the king himself in 1612<sup>48</sup> when James read, ‘not without

<sup>40</sup> Questier, *Newsletters*, 22.

<sup>41</sup> Questier here references newsletter 9, the one containing the negative report about Field, in a footnote.

<sup>42</sup> Questier, *Newsletters*, 22, footnote 117.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 148, 153-4. Legatt/Legate was burned at Smithfield on 18 March 1611/12, Withman/Wightman in Lichfield on 11 April 1612.

<sup>44</sup> King James I of England, *A True Relation of the Commissions and Warrants for the Condemnation and Burning of Bartholomew Legatt and Thomas Withman [...] in the Year, 1611. Signed with K. James his own hand.* (London: 1651). ‘Withman’ here is Wightman. ‘1611’ here is our 1612 (the warrants were dated before 25 March). Edward Wightman was the last person ever to be burned for heresy in England. It is not known why *A True Relation* calls Wightman ‘Thomas’.

<sup>45</sup> *The Letters of John Chamberlain*, ed. by Norman Egbert McClure, 2 vols (Philadelphia: 1939), I, 337.

<sup>46</sup> Conradus Vorstius, or Conrad Vorst, 1569-1622. Vorstius, originally from a Roman Catholic family, had converted to the reformed position, and his orthodoxy studying as a theologian (gaining DD 1594) in the early 1590s had not been in question. Subsequently he was perceived as moving towards an Arminian position, eventually becoming successor to Arminius at Leiden in 1610.

<sup>47</sup> On predestination, the Trinity, and the person and work of Christ respectively.

<sup>48</sup> In his polemical work: King James I of England, *His Majesties Declaration concerning His Proceedings with the States generall of the United Provinces of the Low Countreys, In the Cause of D. Conradus Vorstius.* (London: 1612). Written by James in French, subsequently translated into English with James’ permission.

much horror and detestation',<sup>49</sup> Vorstius' *Tractatus* of 1610<sup>50</sup> on the nature and attributes of God, and his defence of this latter of 1611.<sup>51</sup> James was so condemnatory of the heterodoxy of Vorstius that he described him as 'a wretched Heretique, or rather Atheist',<sup>52</sup> and 'a Monster',<sup>53</sup> and denoted his Arminianism 'such monstrous blasphemie and horrible Atheism'.<sup>54</sup> Clearly, the unorthodoxy of the Arians and of Vorstius was considered as such by *both* Rome *and* the Calvinistic protestants (amongst whom James must be included – a close reading of *His Majesties Declaration* shows that James certainly aligns himself 'unto the true reformed Church of God').<sup>55</sup> So these instances, whilst certainly indicating James as being 'a defender of orthodoxy', place him within an orthodoxy entirely within the compass of Church of England high Calvinism. This certainly does not indicate a move back towards Rome. We can understand, however, that some recusant Romanists might have felt there was some cause for optimism – possibly mistaking what they perceived as James' anti-Calvinist heterodoxy for a sympathy towards Roman orthodoxy as they conceived it. As for Field, James most assuredly does not challenge his (Field's) Calvinistic orthodoxy – only his methodology, if the story is true.

### 9.3 The offending book – Field's Book 5

Questier identifies<sup>56</sup> this 'new booke [...] of D feildes' as 'Richard Field, *Of the Church. Five Bookes* (1606-10)'. But the book is of course more particularly Field's Book 5-with-appendix (1610), very recently published (entered into the Register of the Company of Stationers 23 March 1610),<sup>57</sup> Books 1-4 having been published in 1606. It is perhaps unlikely that this new book (Book 5) would have been bound at all at this stage so soon after its publication – and even more unlikely that it would have been bound together with Books 1-4 (as became the norm later, if and when these books were

<sup>49</sup> King James I of England, *His Majesties Declaration* [against] *Vorstius* (London: 1612), 3; or in *The Workes* [...] (London: 1616), 350.

<sup>50</sup> Conradus Vorstius, *Tractatus Theologicus de Deo sive de Natura et Attributis Dei* (Leiden: 1610), a reprint with a new title of his *Disputationes Decem de Natura et Attributis Dei* (Steinfurt: 1602).

<sup>51</sup> Conradus Vorstius, *Exegesis Apologetica* (1611).

<sup>52</sup> King James I of England, *His Majesties Declaration* [against] *Vorstius* (London: 1612), 2; or in *The Workes* [...] (London: 1616), 349.

<sup>53</sup> *His Majesties Declaration*, 5, or *Workes*, 350.

<sup>54</sup> *His Majesties Declaration*, 4 and 350 respectively.

<sup>55</sup> *His Majesties Declaration*, 17 and 354 respectively; 'true' is rendered 'trew' in *Workes*.

<sup>56</sup> Questier, *Newsletters*, 78, footnote 237.

<sup>57</sup> '7<sup>mo</sup> Regis / 23<sup>o</sup> Martij master Waterson warden /. Entred for his Copy under th[e h]andes of master BARKHAM, A booke called *The Fifte booke of the Churche with an Appendix contayninge a defence of suche partes and passages of the former books as have bene eyther excepted against, or wrested to the mayntenance of Romishe Errors*, by master Doctor. FFEILD', in *Transcript of the Registers of the Company of Stationers. 1554-1640 A.D.*, ed. by Edward Arber, 5 vols (London: privately printed, 1875-7), III (1876), 193; this transcribes the entry in the original manuscript, III, 429, the entry for Field belonging to the year '1609', i.e. 1610. The entry for Field's *Fifte booke* is therefore dated 23 March 1610.



ever re-bound).<sup>58</sup> It is therefore arguably most likely that Montagu<sup>59</sup> was indeed reading from the new Book 5 of 1610, which commences with the fifty-nine chapters of Book 5 itself, and concludes with the *Appendix* to the 1606-published Books 1-4 which answers objections made to the earlier work by various recusant Romanists – principally Theophilus Higgons. Higgons was a former protestant who had embraced the Roman cause<sup>60</sup> and who, self-exiled in Douai, ‘having made shipwreck of the faith, and forsaken his calling, laboureth to justify or make good that he hath done’.<sup>61</sup>

It is true that in this *Appendix*, and in Book 5 which precedes it, Field continues his polemical style whereby he frequently ventures into disdainful assessment and analysis of his opponents. This is entirely typical of his time and of the constant interchange in this era between the protestants and recusants, but no more so than in his previous Books 1-4, which King James would already be thoroughly aware of. In fact, in Book 5 it is not until chapter 10 that we find the first negative comment against Rome. Unless it can be shown that the reports are exaggerated of the king’s admiration of Field, and of Field’s being frequently in James’ company, and of their theological discussion together, then it would seem strange that the king should be taken by surprise now by Field’s renewed polemic in his recent Book 5. James would be well acquainted with Field’s style of analysis and argument, and with his methodology, since the 1606 Books 1-4.

A sample of Field’s sometimes derisive methodological style will suffice to demonstrate my own belief that James’ alleged negative reaction was not entirely unreasonable – even if, perhaps, it was coloured by his desire to retain an independent stance as to the precise doctrinal position he held, and to avoid being too easily identified with any one particular faction (a matter I discuss below, shortly). My sample comes from Field’s *The Epistle to the Reader* at the commencement of his 1610 *Appendix* to Books 1-4.<sup>62</sup> Referring to his three recusant antagonists who have written against him, Field declares:

<sup>58</sup> Books 1-4 were reprinted in 1614 by Nicholas Okes, who printed the 1610 Book with appendix. In the 1614 reprint Okes corrects a large number of printing errors from the 1606 edition, which had been printed by Humfrey Lownes. Surviving volumes of all five books and appendices bound together are sometimes the 1606 and 1610 printings, sometimes the 1614 and 1610. It would be a not unreasonable conjecture that the 1614 printing was undertaken at least partly in order to supply extra copies of Books 1-4 to bind together with the 1610 volume.

<sup>59</sup> I address James Montagu’s influence later in this chapter.

<sup>60</sup> Higgons subsequently renounced his Romanism, perhaps at the influence of Thomas Morton, preaching a renunciation sermon at St Paul’s Cross in March 1611. See Theophilus Higgons, *A sermon preached at Pauls Crosse the third of March, 1610* [i.e., 3 March 1610/11]. By Theophilus Higgons. In testimony of his heartie reunion with the Church of England, and humble submission thereunto (London: 1611).

<sup>61</sup> (5.App.ER/iv.257).

<sup>62</sup> *An Appendix: containing a defence of such parts and passages of the former four books, as have been either excepted against, or wrested to the maintenance of Romish errors* (iv.256/1610.post-5.528/1628.747).

Such is the insufficiency and weakness of the idle and empty discourses of these men [...] I thought it not amiss to take a little pains in shewing the folly of these vain men, who care not what they write so they write something, and are in hope that no man will trouble himself so much as once to examine what they say [...].<sup>63</sup>

Two things may be said. First, this sort of unsubstantiated invective would not be acceptable in modern scholarship, or would at least be frowned upon. In the surrounding text of *The Epistle to the Reader* Field makes no justification of this intensely personal pejoration. In the 127,000 words of the *Appendix* Field does analyse his opponents' writings in minute detail and justifies his opinion of their scholarship – but not here in the *Epistle*, where his negative opinions stand starkly undefended. Field may be wrong to claim that his opponents do not imagine they will be rebuffed, for rebuttals, and defences of replies to answers, were the norm. But secondly, it must be acknowledged that this sort of derogatory invective was entirely typical of the fierce interchanges between the protestants and the recusants in this era.<sup>64</sup> Field is not alone. 'Scandalous calumniation' and the like are regularly charged of one party by the other. King James must surely know this, and I find it difficult to believe he really thought Field to be worse than most.

#### 9.4 James – Field's friend or foe?

We have noted King James' admiration of Field's preaching, his regret at having not favoured Field more. On this and other testimony James evidently liked and respected Field, and liked to discuss theological issues with him. He had been summoned to attend the Hampton Court Conference in 1604 by the king, who retained Field as royal chaplain in ordinary,<sup>65</sup> and made him dean of Gloucester (from 1610); and at James' nomination Field might have become bishop of Oxford had not his death intervened after a seizure, at age 55.<sup>66</sup> Additionally, James chose Field as one of the first fellows of the ill-fated Chelsea College,<sup>67</sup> which had been founded in 1609 for the very purpose of furthering anti-Rome polemic in a scholarly manner, answering the now frequent polemical discourses of Romanists against Church of England Calvinism. This not only suggests James had high regard for Field, but indicates also that he was not at this stage minded to make any move towards Rome.

<sup>63</sup> (5.App.ER/iv.257-8).

<sup>64</sup> As indeed between the various recusant parties, e.g. Jesuits/non-Jesuits, and as indeed between the protestants and the Presbyterian-minded puritans.

<sup>65</sup> It was Elizabeth I who had first made Field chaplain, as noted previously.

<sup>66</sup> In respect of Field being admitted as prebend of Windsor early in James' reign (1604), we should note that in fact it was Elizabeth I who had made the appointment in prospect, pending a vacancy (*Memorials*, 8).

<sup>67</sup> Then 'Chelsey Colledge', or similar variant spelling.

It is strange, then, that we have this one record of James' alleged antipathy to Field, especially considering that all other evidence points to a friendly intimacy between the king and Field, who was a royal chaplain. There can be little doubt that James was fully convinced generally of Field's 'good learning'. Can Birkhead be trusted to have given us an unbiased account? It is Birkhead who wrote: 'a quarter of m' Napper was sett upon an old arch in oxford<sup>[68]</sup> besides Christ Church, and his hand hanging perpendiculariter downe to the ground. under the same did arise a springe of most excellent faire water, where never any was before.'<sup>69</sup> A more cynical scholar might possibly suggest that Birkhead was prone to indulging in wishful thinking in matters that furthered the recusant cause. I suggest there is no good cause for doubting that the incident concerning Field's book, or something like it, took place; accounting for the story's provenance would be problematic otherwise. But, as I state in my *ODNB* article on Field, Birkhead 'was not a disinterested observer', and the story could be exaggerated, misinformed or a misinterpretation of the event. Alternatively the reporting chain may have been multiple people long, increasing the likelihood of mis-transmission or exaggeration.

A probably unanswerable question of interest is: who actually was the observer who witnessed the alleged incident? We should perhaps suppose that there was someone present at court with recusant sympathies.<sup>70</sup> If so, we might venture the suggestion that for some reason or other the king was minded to be in mollifying mood in that person's presence that day, and accordingly acted as reported, especially if in the immediate context there were cause for vexation generally. But this is speculation. It would also be speculative to suggest that the king that day wished not so much to humour a recusant sympathiser, but rather to vex someone or some party present from the other (puritan) end of the theological spectrum – a not unknown occurrence. More likely, or additionally, we note Birkhead's testimony that the king had acted like this 'at other severall tymes', and it might be sufficient explanation that the king found himself irritated and reacted momentarily in a not-untypical intemperate provocative rejoinder.

But it is well known that the king seemed deliberately to maintain an appearance of studied ambiguity as to his exact favoured theological position – preferring to hold, and wanting to be known as holding, the 'middle way'. His 'put-downs' of anyone whom he perceived as trying to push him towards one extreme or the other are well accounted for. That James is a most determined opponent of Rome is certain, as evidenced in various ways above and by his writing of his *Apologie* in 1607.<sup>71</sup> This contains a forthright answer against *two Breves* of Pope Paul V, and against Bellarmine's

<sup>68</sup> Again, underlining here is Questier's reproduction of underlining in Birkhead's original holograph.

<sup>69</sup> Questier, *Newsletters*, 99, newsletter no. 13 in the collection. The recusant secular priest George Napper had been executed for treason on 9 November 1610, and here Birkhead refers to one part of his quartered body.

<sup>70</sup> Or had cordial relations with someone with recusant sympathies.

<sup>71</sup> King James I of England, *Triplici nodo, triplex cuneus. OR An Apologie for the Oath of Allegiance, Against the two Breves of Pope Paulus Quintus, and the late letter of Cardinal Bellarmine to G. Blackwel the Arch-priest*. (London: Robert

letter to the English archpriest Blackwell. James' *Premonition* of 1609<sup>72</sup> written to the states of Christendom, and his *Remonstrance* of 1615<sup>73</sup> against Cardinal Perron, likewise are polemics against Rome. But is it Rome's political and ecclesiastical pretensions that James is so opposed to, or Rome's doctrinal theology? Very clearly the former, but rather less clearly the latter. If James has indeed defended a sermon 'against justification by onely faith, and provinge workes of penance and namely satisfaction to god',<sup>74</sup> then it fits well with a view generally of James that he will not be pinned down to doctrinal absolutes when he suspects or feels he is being pushed back towards the presbyterianism of his hated upbringing (which he speaks of with feeling in his *Premonition*),<sup>75</sup> or towards an English puritanism with its presbyterian leanings. On such occasions – and perhaps the alleged incident concerning Field's Book 5 (and his defence of the sermon) falls in this category – a sufficient explanation for James' provocative behaviour may be that he was mischievously or intemperately playing 'devil's advocate'. We do not need to suppose that James was rejecting his protestant heritage, only that he did not like over-dogmatic pronouncements from those who were too sure of themselves in doctrinal matters.

Given that James is alleged to have complained about the 'Cavills, sophisms etcetera and that he did not like that men should handle matter rather with Cunninge then good learninge',<sup>76</sup> it is most likely that it is Field's sarcastic manner, noted elsewhere in this study, that has offended James. But there is an irony here, in that James himself has indulged in exactly the same polemical strategy. Scornful phraseology has before now flowed from his pen, too. For example, against a letter written by Cardinal Bellarmine to George Blackwell (Birkhead's predecessor), he wrote: 'hee maketh so brave vaunts and bragges of it' and 'such cloudy and foggy mists of untruthes and false imputations'.<sup>77</sup> Questier himself notes 'James's railing against Bellarmine'.<sup>78</sup> It cannot be doubted that James is fully aware that sarcasm and robust language, his own included, is routinely employed on both sides of the protestant-recusant divide. Nor can it be doubted that James knows Field to be of supremely 'good learninge'. Either James or a modern scholar may possibly wish to fault Field's analysis and

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Barker, Printer to the Kings most Excellent Majestie. Anno 1607.) The Latin title means *Triple wedge for triple knot*, the triple knot being the three missives answered by James.

<sup>72</sup> King James I of England, *An Apologie for the Oath of Allegiance [...] Together with a Premonition of his Majesties, to all most Mightie Monarches, Kings, free Princes and States of Christendom* (London: by Robert Barker, Printer to the Kings most Excellent Majestie. April. 8. Anno 1609.)

<sup>73</sup> King James I of England, *A Remonstrance for the Right of Kings, and the Independence of Their Crownes, Against an Oration of the Most Illustrious Card. Of Perron, Pronounced In The Chamber of the third Estate*. (London: Jan. 15. 1615.)

<sup>74</sup> See first section of this chapter, and Questier, *Newsletters*, 79.

<sup>75</sup> E.g., 'I that was persecuted by *Puritanes* there, not from my birth only, but euen since foure moneths before my birth', King James I of England, *An Apologie for the Oath of Allegiance [...] Together with a Premonition [...]* (London: 1609), 45; also James VI, King of Scotland, *Basilikon Doron* (Edinburgh: 1599), 46-51.

<sup>76</sup> See above, and Questier, *Newsletters*, 79.

<sup>77</sup> King James I of England, *An Apologie*, 1609 edition, 66 and 45 respectively. Other examples include 'unapt and unmannerly similitude' (*Apologie*, 64), and 'this prophane & new conceit' (*Premonition*, 115) and, 'what an impudencie or wilfull ignorance is this' (*Premonition*, 123).

<sup>78</sup> Questier, *Newsletters*, 22.

come to a different conclusion, but an accusation of poor reasoning would be hard to justify in Field's work. I can confirm this myself, having read closely the entire 1610 publication of *Of the Church*, Book 5.

### 9.5 The influence of James Montagu

We should briefly consider Montagu, the other person in this drama. At the time of this alleged incident, James Montagu<sup>79</sup> was bishop of Bath and Wells and dean of the Chapel Royal, and was present (as Field too) at the Hampton Court conference. *ODNB* says of him: 'Montagu was the epitome of mainstream Jacobean conformist Calvinism. His intimacy and favour with the new king was immediate and lifelong. He attended the king constantly, and no cleric had more direct personal contact with James than Montagu; Francis Bacon judged him one of the three most influential servants in the king's household', and Montagu had worked with the king on *An Apologie for the Oath of Allegiance* in 1607.<sup>80</sup> James' writing of this work caused something of a scandal at court because his obsession with it caused him to neglect many or most of his duties. According to the French Ambassador, he shut himself away for much of the winter of 1607-8 in his houses at Royston and Newmarket, with only the faithful Montagu present with him plus an unknown cleric. The Ambassador, averring himself to be 'particulièrement informé', wrote describing James as 'n'ayant été vu, ni assisté durant cette solitude, que du maître de Chapelle [Montagu] & d'un Ministre qu'il avoit appelé tout exprès de cette ville [London], pour lui fournir de mémoire & de matiere'.<sup>81</sup> The identity of this 'expressly called' minister, clearly known to Montagu, who 'furnished [James] with intelligence and material' is unknown – obvious candidates such as Bilson and Andrewes seem to have been ruled out. It must have been a divine with excellent memory and proven command of the fine points of the dispute between Romanism and protestantism, able to answer the king's constant questioning in an instant – someone who perhaps was shy of his identity being known. Could it have been our Field? The characterisation fits. And although this is only a speculative guess, it is worthy of consideration.

<sup>79</sup> James Montagu (b. c.1568, d. 1618), first Master of Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge 1596 (on account of the close relations between his family and the Sidney family whose foundation the college was), Dean of the Chapel Royal 1603 (the deanery revived by Whitgift and Bancroft 1603 'as a safeguard against Scottish Presbyterian influence in James's English court'); Bishop of Bath and Wells 1608, Bishop of Winchester 1616 (see *ODNB* article on Montagu).

<sup>80</sup> *ODNB* article on Montagu.

<sup>81</sup> Antoine le Fèvre de la Boderie, French Ambassador, *Ambassades de M de la Boderie en Angleterre*, 3 vols (1750), III, 5. This is in a letter to M de Puisieux, dated 1 January 1608 (French Gregorian calendar). Rough translation is: 'neither having been seen nor attended to during this solitude, except by the dean of the Chapel Royal and a minister called expressly from this city, to supply him with information and material'.

Montagu also published and wrote a panegyric preface to King James' *Workes* (1616)<sup>82</sup> (the only extant written remains of Montagu) and at some stage is known to have read the four volumes of Bellarmine's works to the king.<sup>83</sup> This leads us to the conclusion that it is entirely plausible, as alleged, that he would have been reading Field's Book 5 to the king as well. Birkhead has informed us that Montagu 'shewed of late a new booke to the kinge of D feildes. the king bad him read it', so it is reasonable to conclude that it was Montagu who made the selection of what, and from where, to read. Given that there are no negative comments against Rome in Book 5 until at least chapter 10, we conclude that Montagu has chosen what portion to read, rather than merely reading from the beginning. Montagu is hardly likely to have deliberately sought to vex the king, so we infer that he must have been as surprised as anyone present at the king's 'great angre'. Additionally, it is entirely reasonable to suppose that, if there had been a lapse in the king's high esteem towards Field, then Montagu, the fellow conformist Calvinist, would have been active in healing the breach.

In summary: if this incident took place as alleged, it is likely that the report is exaggerated because of the vested interests of those in the reporting chain. In addition, the current mood of the king – ever unwilling to be pigeon-holed into a precise doctrinal position, and disposed in one direction rather than the other on this occasion – may be all that is needed to account for his reaction. And in the light of subsequent good relations there seems no good cause to think anything other than that the breach was quickly healed.

### 9.6 The testimony of William Laud, 3 June 1621

But before we conclude this section, there is one piece of circumstantial evidence to consider that could possibly be construed as having a bearing upon King James' attitude to Field. Field was granted the deanery of Gloucester by King James on 8 January 1610,<sup>84</sup> following Thomas Morton (who had held the office from 1607 to 1609) when he was promoted to the deanery of Winchester.<sup>85</sup> We are told by Field's son Nathaniel: 'About the Yeare 1610. King James bestowed on him the Deanery of Glocester, at which Deanery he never resided for any long time, but only was wont to Preach there 4 or 5 times in a Yeare. Whensoever he Preached there he was heard by a great and a full Auditorie,

<sup>82</sup> *King James I of England, The Workes of the most High and Mighty Prince Iames, By the grace of God Kinge of Great Brittain, France & Ireland, Defendo of ye Faith &c. published by James Bishop of Winston (London: 1616).*

<sup>83</sup> ODNB article on Montagu.

<sup>84</sup> The full text of the grant is at PRO, State Papers Domestic, James I, SP 14/52. The entry in 'James I: Volume 52, January, 1610' in *Calendar of State Papers Domestic: James I, 1603-1610*, ed. by Mary Anne Everett Green (London: HMSO, 1857), 580, reads: 'Jan. 8. Westminster. 5. Patent appointing Dr. Rich. Field Dean of Gloucester Cathedral, on resignation of Dr. Thos. Merton.'

<sup>85</sup> 'Grant to Dr. Thos. Morton of the Deanery of Winchester' dated 7 November 1609, and 'Re-grant of the Deanery of Winchester' dated 11 December 1609, *Calendar of State Papers Domestic: James I, 1603-1610*.

the People of that Place much Honouring and Loving him.’<sup>86</sup> After Field died in 1616 Nathaniel records: ‘When King *James* heard of his Death he was very sorrie, and blamed himselfe that he had don no more for him, his Words were, *I should have don more for that Man.*’<sup>87</sup>

Shortly after Field’s death in November 1616 he was replaced at Gloucester by William Laud,<sup>88</sup> the future archbishop of Canterbury. This was the first preferment conferred upon Laud for four years, since he had been ‘sworn one of his Majesties Chaplains in Ordinary on the third of *November, Anno 1611*,’<sup>89</sup> ‘by the power and favour of’<sup>90</sup> his friend Richard Neile<sup>91</sup> (then bishop of Lichfield and Coventry). The seventeenth century historian Peter Heylyn writes of Laud: ‘so it was with this new Chaplain; many Preferments fell, but none to him’<sup>92</sup> until ‘his Majesty began to take him into his better thoughts, and for a testimony thereof bestowed upon him the *Deanry of Glocester*, void by the death of the Reverend Right Learned Doctor *Feild*, whose excellent Works will keep his Name alive to succeeding Ages: A *Deanry* of no very great value, but such as kept him [Laud] up in reputation, and made men see he was not so contemptible in the eyes of the King as it was generally imagined.’<sup>93</sup> Providing further evidence of the low esteem in which the deanery was held – but also, on the face of it, of James’ increasing esteem for Laud – we are told that that the king had described the deanery to Laud as ‘a shell without a kernel’ but ‘an earnest of his future favour’.<sup>94</sup> The source of this seems to have been Laud himself but Laud alone – from his diary entry for 3 June 1621, over four years later, reporting words of the king spoken on that later date (and thus not at the time of the preferment).<sup>95</sup> Whether the king actually used the words ‘shell without a kernel’, or whether this was Laud’s interpretation of the king’s intended meaning, is moot – as is whether either the king, or Laud, actually used the words ‘an earnest of his future favour’, or whether that was the interpretation of the highly pro-Laud *The Orthodox Churchman’s Magazine*.

<sup>86</sup> Field, Nathaniel, *Some Short Memorials* [...] (London: 1717), 10-11.

<sup>87</sup> *Some Short Memorials*, 17. Italics original.

<sup>88</sup> ‘James I – volume 90: February 1617,’ in *Calendar of State Papers Domestic: James I, 1611-18*, ed. by Mary Anne Everett Green (London: HMSO, 1858), 430-438.

<sup>89</sup> Peter Heylyn, 1599-1662, *Cyprianus Anglicus, or, the History of the Life and Death, of The Most Reverend and Renowned Prelate William, By Divine Providence, Lord Archbishop of Canterbury* [...] (London: 1668), 64. Italics original. Heylyn, an admirer of Laud, wrote or completed this work in 1662.

<sup>90</sup> *Cyprianus Anglicus*, 64.

<sup>91</sup> Richard Neile, 1562-1640, successively bishop of Rochester (1608), Lichfield and Coventry (1610), Lincoln (1614), Durham (1617), and Winchester (1628); and the archbishopric of York (1631).

<sup>92</sup> *Cyprianus Anglicus*, 65.

<sup>93</sup> *Cyprianus Anglicus*, 65. Italics original.

<sup>94</sup> ‘The Life of the Most Rev. William Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury’, in *The Orthodox Churchman’s Magazine and Review*, vol. VII., July to December 1804, 5.

<sup>95</sup> ‘The Diary of the Most Reverend Father in God William Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury’ in *The Works of the Most Reverend Father in God, William Laud, D.D. sometime Lord Archbishop of Canterbury*, vol. III, ‘Devotions, Diary, and History’ (Oxford: Parker Society, 1853), 136. The entry reads: ‘The King’s gracious speech unto me, June 3, 1621, concerning my long service. He was pleased to say, he had given me nothing but Gloucester, which he well knew was a shell without a kernel.’

We find significant data here. First, and notably, we find in Heylyn – who was vehemently opposed to the puritan party of the Church of England, and correspondingly an admirer (as well as biographer) of Laud – a yet further testimony to the good esteem in which Field was held. Secondly, the grant of a deanery was certainly preferment, and this deanery did afford opportunity to both Field and Laud to further their reputations as churchmen – and yet it evidently did not stand very high in common estimation. Thirdly, we note that, in common perception (at least later), Laud may not have been esteemed very highly by the king at this stage. But might we also see here an indication that Field's reputation with the king may not have been high either? The possibility cannot be dismissed. Heylyn, also pro-Laud, makes this further comment about Gloucester:

At the bestowing of [Gloucester] Deanry his Majesty told him [Laud], that he had been informed that there was scarce ever a Church in *England* so ill governed, and so much out of order as that was, requiring him in the general to reform and set in order what he found amiss. Being thus forewarned, and withall forearmed, he makes hast to *Glocester*, where he found the Church in great decay, many things out of order in it, the Communion Table standing almost in the midst of the Quire, contrary to the posture of it in his Majesties Chappel, and of all the Cathedral Churches which he had seen. Which being observed, he called a *Chapter* of the Prebends, and having acquainted them with his Majesties Instructions, easily obtained their consent [. . .].<sup>96</sup>

Heylyn proceeds to describe how two chapter acts were passed: one for repairing the building, the other 'for transposing the Communion Table to the East end of the Quire, and placing it all along the Wall',<sup>97</sup> the latter being effected 'in the declining of the year 1616'.<sup>98</sup> The speed of this is interesting: Heylyn mentions two letters written by Laud describing 'His Majesties instructions, the Contents of the two Chapter Acts, and how he had proceeded on them' – one to friend Neile dated '3 March 1616' (i.e. 1617), only three months after Field's death.<sup>99</sup> Laud's actions in Gloucester aroused much opposition, especially locally – and from the bishop (Miles Smith)<sup>100</sup> in particular. We wonder, had the king known about the communion table being forward in the choir? And had he disapproved? And if so, did this, and the poor state of the cathedral and its governance, in the king's estimation reflect badly on Field? Either Field had instigated the table being brought forward (as per the Book of Common Prayer rubric for churches generally), or (if it had been the previous dean Morton's doing, or just local custom) Field had allowed it to remain there against the national norm for cathedrals, but as per the usual custom for parish churches. Or had James only spoken to Laud of the disrepair and/or ill government? Or did James ever speak to Laud negatively about Gloucester – is Laud's

<sup>96</sup> *Cyprianus Anglicus*, 69. Italics original.

<sup>97</sup> *Cyprianus Anglicus*, 69.

<sup>98</sup> *Cyprianus Anglicus*, 70. At this time 'the declining of the year 1616' means the end of March 1616/17 CE; i.e., the March after November 1616, the month of Field's death.

<sup>99</sup> *Cyprianus Anglicus*, 69.

<sup>100</sup> Miles Smith (1554-1624), DD (1594), bishop of Gloucester, 1612-1624. Translator for (OT), and (with Bilson) final editor of, the King James translation of the Bible, and wrote a preface for it. Smith was a Calvinist theologian, with a mastery of biblical languages, and was a bibliophile.



testimony exaggerated or embellished, or does he perhaps innocently (or otherwise) assume the king's opinion on all these matters? For it would appear there is no corroborating evidence outside Laud's own testimony that James ever gave those 'instructions' apart from the later repetition of the story by the not-disinterested and admiring biographer Heylyn? The possibility that it is Laud who retrospectively put words into the king's mouth cannot be discounted. We must remember that it is Field who historically has almost universal admiration and approbation, whereas Laud is certainly remembered widely (but not universally) for his autocratic style and his ability to court controversy. It may be these that account for the communion table being placed against the east wall, rather than James thinking Field had not performed well.

In summary: King James may possibly have been concerned about Gloucester cathedral, in respect either of the table or of its repair and governance, and this may possibly have reflected on Field on any or all of these counts. If so, we have a possible circumstantial indication of a lessening of the favour in which Field was held by the king. But we cannot be sure, and I am inclined to think this unlikely, or at least insignificant.

## 9.6 Chapter summary

The claim that King James threw Field's Book 5 on the floor contemptuously is based on flimsy evidence from not-disinterested parties. The overriding testimony of the age is that Field was admired by the king as much as by his fellow divines and auditors. The king took pleasure, we have noted, in discussing with him 'points of divinitie'. In my opinion, if the event actually took place, the most likely explanation is that James had in his audience at court one or more recusant sympathisers who, as Montagu read Field's new work aloud, heard him as well as the king; and for reasons accruing from James' well-known disposition to balance extremes of view, on this occasion he placated one party (the physically present Catholic sympathiser(s)), by offending the other (the absent writer). Alternatively, the event did not happen at all – or not as recorded.

There is some evidence that in the aftermath of the publication of *The Fifth Booke* James's enthusiasm for Field cooled markedly. The arch-priest George Birkhead wrote to his representative in Rome on 23 April 1610 that, when the king read the book, shown to him by James Montagu, bishop of Bath and Wells, he 'shewed great dislike and Contempt of the proofes' of its arguments and 'did not like that men should handle matter rather with cunning than good learninge', finally throwing 'it on the ground in a great angre'. However, Birkhead was not a disinterested observer, and whatever the king's immediate reaction to the book, manifestations of his favour to Field resumed.<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> ODNB entry on Field.

## Chapter 10

### – Higgons finds against Field; Field finds for Gerson –

#### 10. Abstract of this chapter

Theophilus Higgons had been an orthodox protestant member of the Church of England who converted to Rome, perhaps by reason of debt. He subsequently wrote stridently against Field who, typically, responded point by point. Later, Higgons reconverted back to the Church of England, perhaps under the influence of Morton, and preached a recantation sermon. In his *First Motive*, whilst a professing Roman devotee, Higgons objects, amongst other things, to Field harnessing the medieval scholar Gerson to his cause. Jean Gerson, a very capable French scholar within the Church of Rome, was in his day (and is known as such to this day) a reformer protesting against papal abuses. Although Field finds fault in Gerson's adherence to much of Rome's doctrinal faults, he lauds Gerson for his reforming stance and absolves him from blame in the condemnation of Hus. This chapter considers recusancy against Field in general, and then explores the triangular relationship between Field, Higgons and Gerson.

#### 10.1 Higgons against Field

When he [Field] first set himselfe to write his Bookes *Of the Church*, Doctor Kettle [...] dissuaded him from it, telling him that [...] he should never live quietly, but be continually troubled with Answers and Replies [...].<sup>1</sup>

So wrote Field's dutiful son, Nathaniel Field, in his short biography of his father, *Some Short Memorials* (written shortly before Nathaniel's death in 1666, but published half a century later). This Dr Kettle is almost certainly Ralph Kettle – or Kettel or Kettell (1563-1643) – who was two years younger than Field and born and raised at Kings Langley, which is very close to present-day Hemel Hempsted (Field's place of upbringing). They may well have known one another in childhood – perhaps at school if, as is certainly possible, they were both educated at the free school in nearby Berkhamsted. Almost certainly they knew one another at Oxford where Kettell matriculated aged 15 at Trinity College in 1579. He was nominated for a scholarship by a Lady Paulet (widow of Sir Thomas Pope, the founder of Trinity College), who lived at Tittenhanger – also very near to both Hemel

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<sup>1</sup> Nathaniel Field, *Memorials*, 20.

Hempsted and Kings Langley. Kettell graduated in 1582 and was elected fellow in 1583, DD in 1597, and president of Trinity College in 1599. It is said that, like Field, he was a Church of England moderate who disliked extremes.<sup>2</sup> Nathaniel continues, noting his father's response: '[...] unto whom [Kettle] he [Field] said, I will so write that they shall have no great Mind to Answer me, as indeed he did.'<sup>3</sup>

But answer him 'they' did. Field himself turned out to have been over-optimistic, as we shall see. Nathaniel Field concedes this, noting, 'Some have taken Exceptions against particular Passages here and there a Place', but considered this sufficiently negligible: 'but the Maine and what is most Materiall they have wholly let alone'.<sup>4</sup> But Nathaniel's assessment of reality may still be somewhat exaggerated: five or more recusants wrote substantial material against Field's *Of the Church*, and Field himself devotes nearly a quarter of the pages of his writings<sup>5</sup> to countering his detractors. The years following the accession of King James saw a veritable flurry of writing by both the protestants and the recusants against each other. Many a tract or tome was written, one against the other, followed typically by an 'Answer' or 'Defence' – and then sometimes a 'Reply to the Answer', etc. A relevant and illustrative example is an interchange between Thomas Morton,<sup>6</sup> future dean and bishop, and Richard Broughton,<sup>7</sup> English recusant catholic missionary-priest. In 1605 Morton wrote *An Exact Discoverie of Romish Doctrine*, essentially arguing against 'the Rebellious Doctrine of the Romish Church',<sup>8</sup> following the powder plot. Broughton responded with *A Just and Moderate Answer*<sup>9</sup> in 1606. Morton in turn countered with *A Full Satisfaction Concerning a Double Romish Iniquitie*<sup>10</sup> later in 1606; then Broughton with the alliterative *A Plaine Patterne of a Perfect Protestant Professor*<sup>11</sup> in 1608. The latter is indeed a blast against Morton, often intensely scathing

<sup>2</sup> See *ODNB* article on Kettell, and also John Aubrey, *Brief Lives*, ed. by Richard Barber (Woodbridge, Suffolk, UK: Boydell and Brewer, 1982), 181-8, or ed. by John Buchanan-Brown (Penguin, 2000).

<sup>3</sup> *Memorials*, 20.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> 200 out of 900 pages in the 1628/1635 editions.

<sup>6</sup> Thomas Morton, 1564-1659, royal chaplain 1606, dean of Gloucester 1607 (Field's predecessor there), dean of Winchester 1609, bishop of Chester 1616, of Coventry and Lichfield 1619, of Durham 1632. Prolific author, particularly engaging recusant catholic writers.

<sup>7</sup> Richard Broughton, c.1561-1635, recusant missionary-priest from c.1593, assistant to the archpriest George Birkhead c.1613. A prolific author, but renowned for 'more enthusiasm than [due] scepticism' (*ODNB*) and for being 'laborious, inaccurate, and credulous to a degree rare even for the age in which he lived' (*DNB*). For example, in his ambitious Richard Broughton, *The Ecclesiastical Historie of Great Brittain* (Douay: 1633), he states his belief that Christianity was founded in Britain by a visit from the apostle Peter.

<sup>8</sup> Thomas Morton, *An exact discoverie of Romish doctrine in the case of conspiracie and rebellion by pregnant observations [...]* (London: 1605), 1.

<sup>9</sup> Richard Broughton, *A Just and Moderate Answer to a most Injurious, and Slaunderous Pamphlet, intituled, An Exact Discovery [...]* (England: 1606).

<sup>10</sup> Thomas Morton, *A Full Satisfaction concerning a Double Romish Iniquitie; Hainous Rebellion, and more then Heathenish Aequivocation [...] Reply upon the Moderate Answerer [...]* (London: 1606).

<sup>11</sup> Richard Broughton, *A Plaine Patterne of a Perfect Protestant Professor which is, to be a False Corrupter, Perverter, and Abuser of Authorities, &c.: taken forth of the first, chiefest, and principal part, of the gloriously intituled booke (A Ful*

and dismissive in such phraseology as ‘this corrupting, and falsifying infection’.<sup>12</sup> But within it he six times references Field as well;<sup>13</sup> on the first such occasion he cites Field with others as being ‘greater and more worthy Protestants then yourselfe [= Morton]’.<sup>14</sup> It is beyond the scope of this study to analyse such a multiple interchange, but we shall shortly consider Higgons’ similar treatment of Field and *vice-versa*.

Field, however confident he had been of the power of his argumentation, did not escape this answer-answer treatment. Field published his first four books *Of the Church* in 1606, entered into the Stationers Company registers 19 June.<sup>15</sup> Sometime in 1607 a 15,000 word anonymous pamphlet appeared called *The First Part of Protestants Proofes*,<sup>16</sup> whose author was unknown to Field but has since been identified as, probably, Richard Broughton, the English recusant whose interchange with Morton is referred to above. *The First Part of Protestant Proofes* argues for the authenticity and authority of the Roman church, asserting that ‘The *Roman* Church ever was [...] this true Church’, and that, ‘The truest [...] interpretation of Scriptures, is in the *Roman* Church’, and that, ‘Traditions are of equall authority with the Scriptures’<sup>17</sup> – over against a number of protestant divines who had written against the Church of Rome since James I came to the throne. These include Sutcliffe, Dove, Willet, Wotton, Parkes, Morton and our Field. Field is the first such divine to be censured by Broughton in this work (at the beginning of chapter 1 and then subsequently throughout), and his name is referenced, along with quotations from *Of the Church*, over thirty times, excluding references in marginal notes. Ironically, Broughton alleges in his work that the protestant writers, far from arguing against Rome and for protestantism, have in fact performed Rome a service in actually defending Romanism – hence the title [...] *Protestant Proofes, for Catholikes Religion*.

Broughton’s *The First Part* is the first of three anti-protestant works by three recusant authors, published between 1606 and 1610 (these being the publication dates of Field’s Books 1-4, and of Book 5 with appendix), which had all troubled Field as directing their criticism partly or largely against him. The others are Edward Maiheiw’s *A Treatise of the Groundes of the Old and New Religion*

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*Satisfaction*) written by [...] M. Thomas Morton [...] (English secret press: c.1608), attributed to Richard Broughton by STC (2<sup>nd</sup> edn), imprint suggested by STC (2<sup>nd</sup> edn).

<sup>12</sup> *A Plaine Patterne*, 3.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 19, 24, 29, 30, 31, 51.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 19 margin.

<sup>15</sup> *Transcript of the Registers of the Company of Stationers. 1554-1640 A.D.*, ed. by Edward Arber, 5 vols (London: privately printed, 1875-7), III (1876), 140v: ‘Simon Waterson [–] Entred for his Copie under the handes of Master Doctor COUELL Master PASFEILD and the wardens A booke called *Of the Churche Five books* by Doctor FFEILDE . . . vj<sup>d</sup>’, transcribing the entry in vol. III, 324 of the original manuscript registers.

<sup>16</sup> Richard Broughton, *The First Part of Protestants Proofes, for Catholikes Religion and Recusancy taken only from the writings, of such Protestant Doctors and Divines of England, as have beene published in the raigne of his Majesty over this Kingdome*. (1607). Attributed to English recusant Richard Broughton. Printed, according to STC (2<sup>nd</sup> edn), by the English secret press, but according to the EHS edition of *Of the Church*, at Paris (iv, 257).

<sup>17</sup> *The First Part of Protestant Proofes*, 39. Italics original.

(1608),<sup>18</sup> and Theophilus Higgons' *The First Motive of T.H. Maister of Arts, and lately minister, to suspect the integrity of his religion* (1609).<sup>19</sup> This latter work and its author will concern us shortly. Higgons was a former Church of England clergyman who had recently renounced protestantism (c. 1608) and moved to the fold of Rome. Field's *Appendix* to Books 1-4, published in 1610 with Book 5, consists entirely of Field's response to these three works. He lists them in date order, but then answers the last first – because, he says, he knows his adversary's name.<sup>20</sup> This *Appendix*, thus 'Divided into three parts',<sup>21</sup> is, we think, significant, in that it shows how Field feels the need to answer his critics – critics whom he had thought 'shall have no great Mind to Answer' him, because of his confidence in his own writing. These three critics prove not to be the last and, even during the remaining six years of his own lifetime, he has cause to answer one more – namely John Breereley.<sup>22</sup>

For the record, Broughton's *The Second Part of Protestant Proofes* seems never to have been written, or was not printed, or is lost. But a 'table' of its anticipated contents appears at the end of *The First Part*,<sup>23</sup> and we do not doubt that Field would have been the object of Broughton's censure again because those contents are all doctrinal, such as in the areas of 'Predestination, Iustification, Inherent grace, Merit and reward of good deedes'<sup>24</sup> – all of which concern Field, and all of which he considers at length in Books 1-4 *Of the Church*. As well as in *The First Part*, Broughton subsequently references Field five times in *A Plaine Pattern*, which was written (c.1608)<sup>25</sup> against Morton's *A Full Satisfaction* of 1606<sup>26</sup> – not against Field specifically, and not so as to provoke Field to respond. After Field's death Broughton, in three more publications attributed to him, continued to attack Field's and

<sup>18</sup> Edward Maihew, *A Treatise of the Groundes of the Old and Newe Religion* [...] (England: English secret press, 1608); printer identification from STC.

<sup>19</sup> Theophilus Higgons, *The First Motive of T.H. Maister of Arts, and Lately Minister, to suspect the integrity of his religion* (Douai: 1609).

<sup>20</sup> 'Mr Higgons is pleased to let us know his name, [...] it being no small comfort for a man to know his adversary' (5.App.ER/iv.258).

<sup>21</sup> Thus *An Appendix* 'The First Part, containing a discovery of the vanity of such silly exceptions as have been taken against the former four books, by one Theophilus Higgons' (iv.259); 'The Second Part, concerning the author [Edward Maihew] of the "Treatise of the Grounds of the Old and New Religion," and such exceptions as have been taken by him against the former books' (iv. 434); and 'The Third Part, containing a brief examination of such pretended proofs for Romish religion and recusancy, as are produced and violently wrested by a late pamphleteer [attributed to Richard Broughton] out of the former books' (iv. 512).

<sup>22</sup> John Breereley, 'Priest', a.k.a. 'I.B.P.', is a pseudonym for the English catholic (but not ordained) religious controversialist James Anderton, 1557-1613, of Lostock, Lancashire. Breereley wrote *The Protestants Apologie for the Roman Church* (St Omer: 1608), an extended version of the earlier *The Apologie of the Romane Church* (England: English secret press, 1604). It is *The Protestants Apologie* which criticises Field, and Field answers him in the subsequent *Appendix* to Book 3, published in the 1628 reprint of *Of the Church*. It used to be thought that John Breereley was the pseudonym of James' Jesuit cousin Laurence Anderton, alias Scroop, 1575-1643; but the actual identification with James was demonstrated by Allison, A. F., 'Who was John Breereley? The identity of a seventeenth-century controversialist', in *Recusant History*, 16 (1982-3), 17-41. James Anderton's works are occasionally listed as authored by Laurence Anderton, e.g. at EEBO. I here make the assumption, with, e.g., *ODNB*, that Allison's identification is correct.

<sup>23</sup> *The First Part of Protestant Proofes*, 40.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 40.

<sup>25</sup> Richard Broughton, *A Plaine Patterne of a Perfect Protestant Professor*, cited above.

<sup>26</sup> Thomas Morton, *A Full Satisfaction Concerning a Double Romish Iniquitie; Hainous Rebellion, and more then Heathenish Aequivocation* (London: 1606).

other protestants' writings. The first of these, *The English Protestants Recantation* of 1617 (a long work of over 100,000 words) references Field, always negatively, 120 times.<sup>27</sup> But by now Field can no longer respond, as he died in 1616. I conclude that Field was over-confident, along with his son Nathaniel, of his ability to avoid the censure of his opponents. In fact, the interchange between the Romanists and protestants was constant and voracious in this era, and all parties were capable of strident polemicism of the sort we have seen in Field's writings – he was not alone. Even James I himself used like language in his *Apologie* and (especially) in his *Premonition*.<sup>28</sup>

We note some quite tight timings regarding these publications and the time taken to write them. Higgons published his *The First Motive* in 1609, probably in St Omer (or possibly Douay). In that era in France, following the Gregorian calendar, this would mean on or after 1 January<sup>29</sup> – not after 24 March, as it would ordinarily mean in Britain then.<sup>30</sup> Sir Edward Hoby,<sup>31</sup> a theologian of moderate Calvinist persuasion, wrote to Higgons in 1609 regretting his (Higgons') conversion to Rome. He finished writing this '*A letter to Mr. T.H.*'<sup>32</sup> on the feast of Sts Philip and James that year (early May), and it was published in June, as acknowledged by Theophilus himself in his own reply to Hoby in December.<sup>33</sup> That this letter was published as a printed work is testimony to the notoriety of this conversion (and subsequent reconversion). Thomas Morton, one of those objected to by Higgons in his *First Motive*, also responds in his 31-page *A Direct Answer*<sup>34</sup> in 1609. Morton was a prolific author who also published two other very lengthy works countering the recusants in 1610.<sup>35</sup> Field responded to Higgons with an exceptionally long piece of nearly 71,000 words, publishing it as *The*

<sup>27</sup> *The English Protestants Recantation* (Douai: 1617), attributed to Richard Broughton by STC (2<sup>nd</sup> edn), Field mentioned c.120 times; *English Protestants Plea* (St Omer: 1621), Field mentioned 4 times; *An Ecclesiastical Protestant Historie* (St Omer: 1624), Field referenced once.

<sup>28</sup> James I, King of England, *An Apologie for the Oath of Allegiance* [ . . . ] (London: 1609).

<sup>29</sup> I.e., on or after 1 January 1609 in the Gregorian calendar, which equates to 22 December 1608 in the Julian Calendar.

<sup>30</sup> Europe had already adopted the Gregorian calendar in 1582, but Britain did not do so until 1752. The year traditionally ended on 24 March in the British Julian calendar, but the new convention of commencing a new calendar year on 1 January was already being adopted, but not consistently, by the late sixteenth century.

<sup>31</sup> Sir Edward Hoby, 1560-1617, almost exact contemporary of Field, courtier, scholar, parliamentarian, collector, letter-writer and translator. He subsequently wrote the intriguingly entitled anti-recusant texts: Sir Edward Hoby, *A Counter-snarle for Ishmael Rabshacheh, a Cecropidan Lycaonite*. (London: 1613); and Sir Edward Hoby, *A Curry-combe for a Coxe-combe. Or Purgatories Knell. In answer of a lewd Libell lately foricated by Jabal Rachil against Sir Edw. Hobies Counter-snarle: Entituled Purgatories triumph over Hell. Digested in forme of a Dialogue by Nick-groome of the Hobie-Stable Reginoburgi* (London: 1615).

<sup>32</sup> Sir Edward Hoby, *A letter to Mr. T.H. late minister: Now Fugitive: from Sir Edward Hoby Knight. In Answere of his first Motive* (London: 1609).

<sup>33</sup> Theophilus Higgons, *The Apology of Theophilus Higgons, Lately Minister, now Catholique. Wherein the Letter of Sir Edw. Hoby Knight, directed unto the sayd T.H. in answere of his First Motive, is modestly examined, and clearly refuted*. (Rouen: 1609.), 52. Theophilus apologises here for his late response to Sir Edward (December 1609). Robert Higgons' letter to Sir Edward Hoby is dated 28 May (see later).

<sup>34</sup> Thomas Morton, *A Direct Answer vnto the Scandalous Exceptions, which Theophilus Higgons hath lately objected against D. Morton*. [ . . . ] (London: 1609).

<sup>35</sup> Thomas Morton, *A Catholike Appeale for Protestants* [ . . . ] (London: 1609), 680 pages, answering John Brekeley, and Thomas Morton, *The Encounter against M. Parsons* [ . . . ] (London: 1610), 448 pages. Parsons was another prominent English recusant writing against the protestant religion.

*First Part of an Appendix* to Books 1-4,<sup>36</sup> together with his Book 5, in early 1610 – within a year of Higgons' *First Motive*. And this is in addition to 56,000 words written subsequently<sup>37</sup> in the same *Appendix* in response to the two other recusant works objecting to Field's Books 1-4.<sup>38</sup> So Field wrote over 127,000 words in that one year between the publication of Higgons' *First Motive* and of his own Book 5. This is nearly 20 percent of everything he ever wrote and published. This is intriguing, but has a possible explanation: in this appendix Field is responding to his detractors. His methodology is to answer their criticisms point by point, stating what they say and then responding – in most cases *ad hoc* – without much, if any, further research. So his structure follows the structure of his critics – which he admits is not ideal but rather is 'very tedious so to do'.<sup>39</sup> Inevitably this process is much quicker for him than his own creative writing, where he has had to do vast amounts of research and to form his own highly involved and pedantic structure. To answer a critic point-by-point was a standard method of the time. A great deal was written by various authors that year (1609), but we recall that this was an exceptionally busy era for ongoing 'conversation' between the recusants and the protestants.

## 10.2 Jean Charlier de Gerson

We have observed that one of Field's principal theses – perhaps the most important – is that the Church of Rome (notwithstanding the errors of 'the prevailing faction of the pope's flatterers')<sup>40</sup> had always truly been a protestant church – or, at least, had contained a true protestant church within it, despite the errors and abuses of the dominant faction. In the remainder of this chapter I shall demonstrate how Field cites one particular scholar of the Roman church, namely John Gerson (whom I introduce more fully shortly) in support of this main thesis. Field in fact takes a considerable number of such scholars from all ages of the church and shows how, at least in part, the doctrines they held were those of the new protestant church. Typically – and Field concedes this – these scholars had each individually embraced at least some (and, perhaps, many or most) of the errors of Rome. But we shall see that it is Field's opinion that this had been an inevitable consequence of their living in their own times. That is to say, the weight of opinion represented by the papal faction, and

<sup>36</sup> Richard Field, *An Appendix contayning a Defense of such partes and passages of the former foure Bookes, as have bin eyther excepted against, or wrested to the maintenance of Romish errors*. (London: 1610), printed together with, and after the end of, Book 5.

<sup>37</sup> We know it was subsequently not only because this physically follows the Higgons material, which would not be conclusive, but because Field writes in *The Epistle to the Reader* introducing his *Appendix*: 'I will first begin with [Higgons] [...] and from him proceed to the rest' (5.App.ER/iv.258); and after his treatment of Higgons, at the beginning of his treatment of Maihew, he writes: 'Having answered [...] Higgons, I will [...] pass from him to his friend' (5.App.Pt2/iv.434).

<sup>38</sup> Edward Maihew, *A Treatise of the Groundes of the Old and Newe Religion* [...] (1608), responded to by Field in *The Second Part of the Appendix*, and (probable author) Richard Broughton, *The First Part of Protestants Proofes, for Catholikes Religion and Recusancy* [...] (England: English Secret Press, 1607), responded to in *The Third Part*.

<sup>39</sup> (5.App.Pt1/iv.351).

<sup>40</sup> (3.42/i.341), and similarly (5.App.Pt1/iv.351).

the sheer force of their tyrannical authority (as Field conceives it), was such that it is quite understandable how the scholars he cites found themselves embracing much of it, as children of their time. For example, John Gerson held the doctrines of purgatory, the immaculate conception, and transubstantiation, whilst nonetheless being a vehement campaigner against certain errors and abuses of his time in general. Field admires him for the latter, whilst forbearing his inevitable acceptance of much standard Roman error. Furthermore, Field is insistent that every protestant doctrine of substance was held by at least some of the ‘worthy guides of the Church’<sup>41</sup> of former generations – commencing with the fathers, and continuing in unbroken succession right up to Field’s day. Or to put it another way, no erroneous Roman doctrine or papal abuse was ever universally held by all scholars of the Church of Rome in any (let alone every) era, since the time of the Fathers. It is Field’s claim, which he substantiates in detail, that these ‘worthy guides of the church’ in all eras both positively affirmed doctrines now known as protestant, and negatively denied doctrines espoused by the papists and considered erroneous by the reformers. So on Field’s view, there has been a continuous history for the entire corpus of protestant doctrine down through history; and the entire corpus of erroneous Romanist doctrine commenced sometime later than the fathers – none of which goes back to the fathers in unbroken continuation. In respect of some erroneous doctrines Field shows when they began but he concedes that, for others, the time when they arose is uncertain, save that they are certainly not original.

Thus, in order to demonstrate this particular thrust of Field, I have chosen the example of this one scholar who gets substantial treatment at Field’s hand, namely John Gerson. Jean Charlier de Gerson, to give him his full French name, 1363-1429, was a French ecclesiastical dignitary, capable disputant and prolific writer. From 1377-1394 he studied at the University of Paris under Pierre d’Ailly (also known as Peter d’Alliaco or Petrus Cameracensis), chancellor of the university and cardinal (later bishop) of Cambrai. They became firm lifelong friends. Gerson took his doctorate in theology and succeeded d’Ailly as chancellor in 1395. Gerson and d’Ailly together campaigned to end the Great Schism of the western church and, having failed to bring about the resignation of both the rival popes Benedict XIII and Gregory XII, they, being conciliarists, urged the convening of a general council to end the schism. After the resulting Council of Pisa, Gerson (who was not himself at the Council) defended it in a tract of 1409. In it he advances the conciliar theory (that a general council has ultimate authority even over a pope, albeit as a last resort) which he and d’Ailly vigorously defended at the ensuing Council of Constance. The proceedings of this Council form a major part of Field’s case concerning John Gerson. For instance, it has been widely held that Gerson and d’Ailly were instrumental in the condemnation of John Hus and Jerome of Prague – not least by Higgons,

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<sup>41</sup> (3.12/l.186/1628.91).



who challenges Field vigorously – but Field insists that this is far from being a fair reflection of reality, as we shall observe later in this chapter.

Much of Field's attention to Gerson occurs in the final *Appendix* attached to the 1610 Book 5. In the first of the three parts of this appendix, Field is countering accusations made by Higgons. Following the publication of Field's Books 1-4 in 1606, Higgons published in 1609 his *The First Motive*, noted above. In this work Higgons, who (in Field's words) 'having made shipwreck of the faith, and forsaken his calling, laboureth to justify or to make good that he hath done',<sup>42</sup> argues against the writings of Field (and also of Humfrey<sup>43</sup> and Morton). But the reason so much attention is given to Gerson in this final appendix is that Higgons is objecting in his work to what Field has written about Gerson in Books 1-4, published in 1606.

So we come to Theophilus Higgons, 1578-1659, MA from Christ Church, Oxford, 1600, who (then a convinced protestant) wrote in 1607 and published in 1608 an anti-Roman tract, *A Briefe Consideration of Mans Iniquitie, and Gods Justice*.<sup>44</sup> But he subsequently and very suddenly converted from a previous protestantism of probable puritan inclinations to Roman Catholicism. He self-exiled to the English College at Douay (his father said 'within twentie daies after, at the most' – i.e. within 20 days of publishing *A Briefe Consideration*).<sup>45</sup> This timing of Higgons' conversion is interesting as it begs the question as to how he could publish this still-pro-protestant work and then so soon convert. Field notes Higgons' own testimony in *The First Motive* that he had 'discovered' 'some notable untruths of D. Field, and D. Morton',<sup>46</sup> 'pretending that the consideration thereof moved him to become a papist'.<sup>47</sup> Higgons subsequently moved from Douay to St Omer – to where his father travelled to try and persuade him back (unsuccessfully) – and then to Rouen. He published *The First Motive of T.H. [...] to Suspect the Integrity of his Religion [...] (1609)*<sup>48</sup> – against Humfrey, Field and Morton – and then *The Apology of Theophilus Higgons, Lately Minister, now Catholique*

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<sup>42</sup> (5.App.ER/iv.257).

<sup>43</sup> Lawrence Humphrey, or Laurence Humfrey, DD, c.1527-1589; able scholar and controversialist; leader of the anti-vestibarian movement; president of Magdalen College, Oxford; prolific writer, including of *Jesuitismi pars prima* (London: 1582) and *Jesuitismi pars secunda* (London: 1584), containing his writing against the 'reasons' of Edmund Campion. It is these writings 'contra Campion' which Higgons targets in his *The First Motive*. See, e.g., *The First Motive*, 167.

<sup>44</sup> Higgons, Theophilus, *A Briefe Consideration of Mans Iniquitie, and Gods Justice: Wherein the distinction of 1. Sinnes into Veniall, Mortall, 2. Sinnes and Punishments into Æquall, Unequall Is Scholasticallie Examined*. (London: 1608).

<sup>45</sup> Robert Higgons, father of Theophilus Higgons, letter to Sir Edward Hoby, dated 28 May 1609, printed at the end of Sir Edward Hoby, *A Letter to Mr. T.H. Late Minister: Now Fugitive: from Sir Edward Hoby Knight. In Answer of his first Motive* (London: 1609).

<sup>46</sup> Words from the long title of *The First Motive*. See above footnote.

<sup>47</sup> (5.App.Pt1/iv.260).

<sup>48</sup> Theophilus Higgons, *The First Motive of T.H. Maister of Arts, and lately minister, to Suspect the Integrity of his Religion* (Douay: 1609).

(December 1609)<sup>49</sup> – answering Sir Edward Hoby's admonishing letter to Higgons of May 1609.<sup>50</sup> Higgons reconverted to protestantism c.1610/11, possibly under the influence of Morton, and preached a recantation sermon and published it as *A Sermon Preached at Pauls Crosse the third of March 1610* [i.e., 3 March 1611]<sup>51</sup> (King James' pardon of Theophilus Higgons is dated 24<sup>th</sup> July 1611).<sup>52</sup> Higgons was then made rector of Hunton near Maidstone and published there (in 1624) the once again anti-catholic *Mystical Babylon, or Papall Rome* [...].<sup>53</sup> It is said of Higgons that at least the first of his conversions, if not both, may have been influenced by ambition, disappointment (in not receiving preferment) or even debt.<sup>54</sup> This is affirmed by his father in his letter to Sir Edward Hoby, in which he writes of his son that 'his judgement [...] I found to be verie defective', 'that his Poperie came from discontentment',<sup>55</sup> that Theophilus did indeed get into debt, and in other ways describes his son's waywardness and inconstancy. Sir Edward Hoby himself in his letter to Higgons charges him with having ill-treated both his father and his wife,<sup>56</sup> speaks sympathetically of his creditors,<sup>57</sup> and declares: 'you are like a reed shaken in the wind' and 'that you were a lover of your selfe, more then a *Lover of God*.<sup>[58]</sup> that you were a *wavering minded man, and unconstant in al your waies*'.<sup>59</sup> Higgons' re-conversion seems to have aroused great interest. This is evidenced by his recantation sermon having been printed in 1611 by three different printers for the same publisher (William Aspley), indicating great demand – and by the testimony of the solicitor general Francis Bacon, who wrote that, 'the parties [i.e. Higgons'] conversion was so notorious, and so generally liked'.<sup>60</sup>

### 10.3 The True Church

In Book 3 of the 1606 volume, Field demonstrates his view that it is the protestant church, and not the current Tridentine Church of Rome, which is the true western church as defined by the notes of

<sup>49</sup> Theophilus Higgons, *The Apology of Theophilus Higgons, Lately Minister, now Catholique. Wherein the Letter of Sir Edw. Hoby Knight, directed unto the sayd T.H. in answere of his First Motive, is modestly examined, and clearely refuted.* (Rouen: 1609).

<sup>50</sup> Sir Edward Hoby, *A Letter to Mr. T.H. Late Minister: Now Fugitive* [...] (London: 1609.) Printed together with a letter *To the Hon. Sir Edward Hoby Knight* from Theophilus' father, Robert Higgons, dated 28 May 1609.

<sup>51</sup> Theophilus Higgons, *A Sermon Preached at Pauls Crosse* (London: for William Aspley, 1611).

<sup>52</sup> James I, King of England, 'The Pardon of Theophilus Higgons' in *A True Relation of the Commissions and Warrants for the Condemnation and Burning of Bartholomew Legatt and Thomas Withman* [...] Signed with K. James his own hand [...] Whereunto are added, *The Pardons of Theophilus Higgons, and Sr Eustace Hart Knight.* (London: MDCLI [1651]), 14-16.

<sup>53</sup> Theophilus Higgons, *Mystical Babylon, or Papall Rome* [...] *In which the wicked, and miserable condition of Rome, as shee now is in her present Babylonian estate, and as she shall be in her future inevitable ruine, is fully discovered* [...] (London: 1624).

<sup>54</sup> ODNB article on Higgons.

<sup>55</sup> Robert Higgons, letter to Sir Edward Hoby.

<sup>56</sup> Sir Edward Hoby, *A Letter to Mr. T.H.*, 17-19.

<sup>57</sup> *A letter*, 18-19.

<sup>58</sup> Italics original. Referencing 2 Timothy 3:2-4 in a marginal note.

<sup>59</sup> Italics original. Referencing James 1:8 in a marginal note.

<sup>60</sup> 'The Pardon of Theophilus Higgons', 16.

the church which he has established in Book 2.<sup>61</sup> Field first refers substantially to Gerson in Chapter 8 of Book 3 – before which Field has already made his principal assertion that the Latin church ‘continued the true Church of God even till our own time: and, that the errors we condemn were not the doctrines of that Church’.<sup>62</sup> This assertion comes in Chapter 6 of Book 3 and by it Field means that the errors and abuses in the Church of Rome were those of one (albeit prevailing) faction only – namely the papal faction – and that, apart from that faction, the Church of Rome had held substantially to protestant doctrines throughout the ages, and disabused itself of all papal error and corruption. So in Chapter 7 of Book 3 Field examines various points of difference ‘between us and our adversaries, wherein some in the Church erred, but not the whole Church’,<sup>63</sup> and thus demonstrates that many worthy guides of the church had held the same doctrines as the protestants now do. Consequently, ‘the true Church, which, and where it was before Luther’s time’<sup>64</sup> had always been the Church of Rome (notwithstanding the erring papal faction), together with ‘all the Churches in the world, wherein our Fathers lived and died.’<sup>65</sup> In Chapter 8 of Book 3 Field cites Wickliffe, Hus, Jerome of Prague, Bernard, Gregory of Rimini, Contarenus, William of Ockham and Gerson as being typical of those ‘who with great magnanimity opposed’ Rome which in all its tyranny obscured true doctrine. Field is so bold as to declare that Rome ‘served antichrist.’<sup>66</sup> In the ensuing chapters this list of campaigners, who were within the Church of Rome yet opposing the Church of Rome, is greatly extended to include such as Cameracensis, Cusanus, Picus Mirandula, Savanarola, Bonaventura, Cassander and many others. Field is aware that some representatives of the protestant cause may seem to have said the opposite – that is to say, they seem to have ascribed to Rome unqualified opprobrium, and at first sight may seem not to have shared Field’s sympathy for his long list of alleged Roman rebels. To this Field responds that their condemnation was focussed on the papal faction, concentrating their disapproval against that faction (who were the defenders of and spokesmen for all the corruption of Rome) – but not intending to damn entirely every Roman theologian of the past fifteen centuries.<sup>67</sup> Here we must note again how Field understands the true church, and how he might differ from his contemporaries. Field holds that there must be a true church everywhere, because of his belief in the perpetuity of the church. But the existence of more

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<sup>61</sup> ‘The Third Book sheweth which is the true church demonstrated by those notes’ (l.xxvii).

<sup>62</sup> (3.6/l.165).

<sup>63</sup> (3.7/l.168).

<sup>64</sup> (3.8/l.171).

<sup>65</sup> ‘Thus then it appeareth, which we think to have been the true Church of God, before Luther or others of that sort were heard of in the world; namely, that wherein all our Fathers lived and died; wherein none of the errors reprov’d by Luther ever found general, uniform, and full approbation; in which all the abuses removed by him were long before by all good men complained of, and a reformation desired.’ (3.8/l.171).

<sup>66</sup> ‘[They] with great magnanimity opposed themselves against the tyranny of the see of Rome and the impiety of those who withheld the truth of God in unrighteousness, who being named Christians served antichrist.’ (3.8/l.171).

<sup>67</sup> ‘If any of our men deny these Churches to have been the true Churches of God, their meaning is limited in respect of the prevailing faction that was in the Church, and including them and all the wicked impieties by any of them defended; in which sense their negative is to be understood.’ (3.8/l.171-172).

than one true church in one metropolitan region would entail manifold schism. Therefore, for him, the one true church in the west was, and always had been, the Church of Rome – despite the ‘damnable heresy’ and abuses and superstitions (which imply heresy) of the prevailing faction. These do not in themselves challenge the ‘true’-ness of the Church of Rome. They would do so, hypothetically, if those heresies had become universally accepted. But such was not the case: Field has been clear to show that every protestant doctrine had been fully accepted and proclaimed by certain worthies – here and there in the church, and constantly over the centuries – and that therefore no heresy had ever had universal acclaim. So in Field’s response to his fellows above, he is essentially deferring to the fact that some other protestant writers reserved the term ‘true’ for a church without major heresy all but ruining it. It is a semantic distinction, not a theological one.

Before I look further at Field’s alleged protestantism of the historic Church of Rome, I turn to a further examination of how Field identifies a ‘true church’. It will repay us to chart briefly the line of argument through the first few chapters of Field’s Book 3. In Chapter 1, Field surveys all the churches of the world, divided into east and west, examining each one so as to establish whether it deserves the title of a true church according to the notes assigned by him. In the edition of 1606 this chapter was very brief (and it is this edition, of course, which Higgons had to hand). But at some stage before his death in 1616 Field made a substantial revision of the chapter which was published in his son Nathaniel Field’s edition of 1628. The result is a very long chapter, comprehensively (and, arguably, pedantically) examining every world church in minute detail – and from internal evidence it owes much to very new scholarship which Field must have only very recently come by.<sup>68</sup> Having conducted his exhaustive survey, Field concludes with two observations. First, despite many differences in ‘outward observations’ and in the ‘manner of delivering’ non-central doctrines, all these world churches that he surveys agree in fundamental ‘verities absolutely necessary to salvation’ – therefore they are true churches. Secondly, where the Church of Rome differs from the Reformed Churches in principal matters, the eastern churches agree with the Reformed Churches against Rome.<sup>69</sup> Field summarises his assertion that all these world churches (save only the Church of Rome) are sufficiently doctrinally orthodox, as follows:

<sup>68</sup> A similar substantial revision was made to Chapter 23 of Book 3 and to chapters 1-12 of the Appendix to Book 3, these revisions also being incorporated in the 1628 edition.

<sup>69</sup> ‘Out of all that which hath been said, two things are observable. First, that, by the merciful goodness of God, all these different sort of Christians, though distracted and dissevered, by reason of diversity of ceremonies and outward observations, different manner of delivering certain points of faith, mistaking one another, or variety in opinion touching things not fundamental, do yet agree in one substance of faith, and are so far forth orthodox, that they retain a saving profession of all divine verities absolutely necessary to salvation, and are all members of the true Catholic Church of Christ. The second, that in all the principal controversies touching matters of religion between the papists and those of the Reformed Churches, they (the eastern churches) give testimony of the truth of that we profess.’ (3.1/i.151-152).

‘[T]hey all deny and impugn that supreme universality of ecclesiastical jurisdiction which the Bishop of Rome claimeth [...] they acknowledge all righteousness to be imperfect, and that it is not safe to trust thereunto, but to the mere mercy and goodness of God [...] they admit not the merit of congruence, condignity, nor works of supererogation [...] they teach not the doctrine of satisfactions [...] they believe not purgatory [...] they believe not transubstantiation, nor the new real sacrificing of Christ [...] they have the divine service in the vulgar tongue.’<sup>70</sup>

Whilst this quotation is drawn from the 1628 (and later) editions, they merely amplify Field’s thesis already stated in the 1606 edition, and do not represent a change or development in Field’s thought.

Chapter 2 has Field addressing what he calls ‘the harsh and unadvised censure’ of the Church of Rome in declaring all the eastern churches to be guilty of schism and heresy. Field is outraged by this because, despite these churches comprising the entire great and ancient multitude of professing Christian believers in the eastern hemisphere, and being ‘constant and undaunted’ in upholding the Christian faith, they are judged by Rome ‘to have no hope of eternal salvation’.<sup>71</sup>

In Chapters 3-5, Field addresses the nature of the heresy and schism with which Rome charges the East, and delineates carefully (in chapter 4) ‘those things which every one is bound expressly to know and believe’,<sup>72</sup> outside of which is damnable heresy. This chapter<sup>73</sup> gives a window into Field’s assessment of the essential and non-negotiable core of Christian belief, commencing with a standard Nicene treatment of the Trinity, then proceeding through the doctrines of creation, the fall, and the incarnation of the divine Son and his propitiatory death, resurrection and ascension – by which he ‘satisfied the wrath of his Father’ and obtained ‘for us’ remission of sins and eternal hope by the gift of ‘the grace of repentant conversion’. Next Field states that, ‘we must constantly believe’ in God’s predestining call (although he does not here use the language of predestination) of those whom he pleases to be ‘partakers’ of eternal salvation and thus to comprise the Church of God. Likewise Field states the crucial nature of the apostles as those who were ‘infallibly led into all truth’ and who ‘left unto posterities that sum of Christian doctrine’ which defines what Field calls ‘the rule of our faith’. This last term is very important and very frequent in Field’s writing and it is clear here, as elsewhere, that, for Field, the ‘rule of faith’ equates to ‘the Christian scriptures’. Finally, Field specifies as necessary doctrines the return of Christ and the last judgement by which (and only by which) are the repentant delivered to heaven, and those who ‘neglect and despise so great salvation’ delivered to hell. We see in these doctrines – the latter ones at least – the crucial respects in which Field’s

<sup>70</sup> (3.1/i.152).

<sup>71</sup> ‘[...] the harsh and unadvised censure of the Romanists, condemning all these Churches as schismatical and heretical’, for ‘All these Churches and societies of Christians, in number many, in extent large, in multitudes of men and people huge and great, in continuance most ancient, in defence of the Christian faith constant and undaunted [...], the bishop of Rome with his adherents, judgeth to be heretics, or at least schismatics, and consequently, to have no hope of eternal salvation’. (3.2/i.153).

<sup>72</sup> (3.4/i.158).

<sup>73</sup> (3.4/i.158-161).

reformed theology is at variance with, and challenges, Rome's. We should note that although Field can be (like many of his contemporaries on both sides) highly pugnacious in the vocabulary and tone of his writing, his analysis is always highly systematic and logical. At every point in arguing against Rome, he faults Roman doctrine against one or other of the above-noted central, essential protestant doctrines. For example, in arguing against the Roman doctrine of satisfactions and merits he demonstrates how it denies the doctrine of the propitiation of the cross.

Included in these three chapters is a careful treatment of the difference between benign misunderstanding and culpable pertinacity – an important distinction for Field, for, 'there are some that are wittingly heretics, some unwittingly'.<sup>74</sup> Heresy in Field's estimation is damnable if it is in respect of essential core truths of the Christian faith, whether 'he that erreth' does so obstinately or not. We should note that Field is dealing here with actual doctrinal error, held with some measure of understanding, not complete ignorance. To be in error in core matters, where the holders of such error are in some cognisance of what they believe, is damnable because they touch the 'matter of our salvation'.<sup>75</sup> Field is entirely typical of his fellow contemporary protestants in this regard. However, error is not necessarily damnable in respect of less central truths. The test lies in pertinacity (Field's word); that is to say, if someone is in non-core error, 'it sufficeth if he [...] carry a mind prepared, and ready to yield assent unto' the truth.<sup>76</sup> A person may be 'deceived in them' yet without 'peril of damnation' unless 'he add pertinacity unto error'. Ignorance and error are damnable if pertinacious – but not otherwise. Likewise schism may be damnable or not, depending on the degree of obstinacy. For example, schism which occurs 'by forsaking the rule of faith, or absolute refusal to be subject to the holy ministry [...] is damnable schism',<sup>77</sup> but, 'if it be doubtful and men carry minds ready to yield when they shall see the right, it is not so.'<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> (3.3/l.154).

<sup>75</sup> 'He that erreth in those things that every one is bound particularly to believe, because they do essentially and directly concern the matter of our salvation, is without any further enquiry to be pronounced a heretic' (3.3/l.156-157).

<sup>76</sup> '[O]ther things that do not so nearly and directly touch the substance of Christian faith, and which a man is not bound upon the peril of damnation expressly to know and believe [...] it sufficeth if he [...] carry a mind prepared, and ready to yield assent unto them, if once it shall appear that they are included in, and by necessary consequence to be deduced from, those things which expressly he doth and must believe [...] a man may be ignorant of, and be deceived in them, and yet without all touch of heresy or peril of damnation, unless he add pertinacity unto error [...] but that only, when men erring in things of this kind, they are so strongly carried by the streams of mispersuasion, that rather than they will alter their opinion, or disclaim their error, they will deny some part of that, which, every one that will be saved must know and believe.' (3.3/l.157).

<sup>77</sup> (3.5/l.163)

<sup>78</sup> (3.5/l.163). Likewise, if 'separation grow out of the pride and pharisaical conceit of fancied perfection and absolute holiness [...] it is damnable schism: but if out of ignorance, or error not overthrowing the rule of faith; or over earnest urging of ceremonies, rites and observations [...] or striving for a precedence; it is dangerous, but not damnable; unless it be joined with such pertinacity, that though it should appear they were in error, or did amiss and contrary to the rule of charity, they would not yield.'

Concluding these chapters, Field finds in favour of all the other churches of the world, notwithstanding many errors and schisms which are not of the most serious kind.

‘We dare not with the proud Romanists condemn so famous Churches as culpable of damnable heresy and schism; and cast so many millions of souls into hell, for every difference in matter of opinion [...]. All these, therefore, holding the rule of faith, and believing all those things that are, on the peril of eternal damnation, to be particularly and expressly known and believed [...] out of error not directly contrary to the rule of faith; we account them in the number of the Churches of God.’<sup>79</sup>

#### 10.4 The Historic Church of Rome the ‘True Church of God’

Thus we see that there were ‘so many millions of souls’ who were members of the true worldwide church of God despite the contrary opinion of Rome. But a second major contention of Field in Book 3, which he develops from Chapter 6 onwards, is that the Church of Rome itself was in a qualified sense the true church of God (in the West), notwithstanding the errors and abuses of the prevailing faction of the papists. In Field’s view, a church does not have to be perfect in order to be a true church. Even a church containing within it much false doctrine and many abuses of superstition and power can, nonetheless, be a true church. The definition of a true church, as we have seen, entails it holding within it, in unbroken succession since the apostles, the entire corpus of true doctrine, i.e., the rule of faith. For a church to be ‘true’, it is not necessary that every spokesman for it is without error; only that somewhere within it each doctrine is held and set forth faithfully by someone, and that this has pertained throughout the Christian ages: there may be considerable error everywhere, but there cannot be even a single doctrine that is held nowhere within it. As noted previously,<sup>80</sup> Field answers the standard mocking jibe of the Romanists,<sup>81</sup> “Where was your church before Luther began?”<sup>82</sup> Field offers the less sarcastic, prosaic response: ‘it was the known and apparent Church in the world, wherein all our fathers lived and died’. Field is aware that counter accusations will follow, so he anticipates Rome’s likely charge that this church is the Romanists’, not the protestants’, with the observation (tightly and comprehensively argued in Book 3) that it is

<sup>79</sup> (3.5/1.164-165).

<sup>80</sup> See Ch. 6.

<sup>81</sup> The protestants were well capable of mocking jibes too.

<sup>82</sup> ‘[The Church of Rome] continued the true Church of God even till our time: and, that the errors we condemn were not the doctrines of that Church [...] notwithstanding the manifold abuses and superstitions that in time crept into it, and the danger of some damnable false doctrine that some taught and defended in the midst of it. It is therefore most fond and frivolous, that some demand of us, where our Church was before Luther began? for we say, it was where now it is. If they ask us, which? we answer, it was the known and apparent Church in the world, wherein all our fathers lived and died [...] If they reply that that Church was theirs and not ours, for that the doctrines they now teach and we impugn, the ceremonies, customs, and observations which they retain and defend, and which we have abolished as fond, vain and superstitious, were taught, used, and practised in that Church wherein our fathers lived and died; we answer, that none of those points of false doctrine and error which they now maintain and we condemn, were the doctrines of that Church constantly delivered, or generally received by all them that were of it; but doubtfully broached and devised without all certain resolution, or factiously defended by some certain only, who, as a dangerous faction, adulterated the sincerity of the Christian verity, and brought the Church into miserable bondage.’ (3.6/1.165-166).

protestant doctrine that can be traced back in unbroken continuation to the apostles – whereas no Roman doctrines now impugned by the protestants ‘were the doctrines of that Church constantly delivered’.<sup>83</sup>

It is in Chapter 6 of Book 3 that Gerson is first quoted. Field makes the point that all the abuses and corruptions of the Church of Rome were indeed present in that church – but not universally so, and not without constant calls for reformation down through the ages. Concerning ‘the abuses and manifold superstitions’ condemned and ‘removed’ by the protestants, Field admits they were present in the historic Latin church, ‘but not without signification of their dislike of them, and earnest desire of reformation’.<sup>84</sup> In this respect he likens the Church of Rome to the churches of Corinth, Galatia etc., in the Bible and makes the point that although these churches were renowned for ‘emulations, division, neglect of discipline, contempt of the apostles of Christ’ and much more, yet it cannot be said of them that they ‘with one consent [...] fell into all the errors and evils’ – for otherwise, those early New Testament churches would have ‘ceased to be the true and Catholic Church of God’. The same may be said, Field argues, of the Church of Rome. Although much ‘dangerous’ and ‘damnable’ error was ‘broached’ within it, which ‘did fret as a canker as Gerson confesseth’, yet they were not universally received ‘with full approbation’.<sup>85</sup> Gerson is thus introduced to us as one of the worthy guides throughout the age of the church who vigorously complained of the error and abuses of the Church of Rome.

Book 3 is three times as long as Books 1 and 2 together. Field is aware that he has ruthlessly to defend his main thesis – that the current protestant church is the continuation of a continuously existing ‘protestant church’ within the historic Roman church – with ample evidence. He does so by quoting a vast array of patristic and scholastic material from the writings of the Latin church in 52 carefully ordered and tightly argued chapters. It is not easy to distil the argument concisely, but my next few paragraphs are an attempt to do so, preserving the logical arrangement of his essential thesis. The main line of Field’s argument, developed over the ensuing chapters and in which Gerson features significantly, is, in brief, as follows.

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<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>85</sup> ‘Touching the abuses and manifold superstitions that we have removed, it is true they were in that Church wherein our Fathers lived, but not without signification of their dislike of them, and earnest desire of reformation [...]. As therefore the Churches of Corinth, [etc.] had in them emulations, division, neglect of discipline, contempt of the apostles of Christ, some that denied the resurrection of the dead, that joined circumcision and the works of the law with Christ in the work of salvation [...] yet it is not to be thought that all that were of these Churches with one consent denied the resurrection, and fell into all the errors and evils above-mentioned; for then doubtless these societies had ceased to be the true and Catholic Church of God; so, though sundry dangerous and damnable errors were broached in the midst of the Church and house of God, in the days of our Fathers, which did fret as a canker as Gerson confesseth; yet were they not with full approbation generally received, but doubted of, contradicted, refuted, and rejected, as uncertain, dangerous, damnable, and heretical.’ (3.6/1.166).



First, Field notes what originally prompted the Reformation: there were, he argues, manifold errors, abuses and superstitions in the Church of Rome at the time of the Reformation. Some of these errors etc., began to creep into the western church very early, some at progressively later times, although he shows that the worst errors and abuses were, generally speaking, the latest. Some of the errors and abuses had a definite and known beginning, whilst others crept in gradually or at an indeterminate time. He gives examples of each category. Moreover, the original 'authors' of some of the corruptions are known, whilst for others they are uncertain.

Secondly, Field defends his view that the corruptions, as he and all reformers saw them, were essentially the doing of a 'faction' within the Church of Rome. Not all the Church of Rome had been carried away with these errors and abuses, but only a faction at any stage of the church's history. This faction was the papal faction, and it grew in magnitude and influence to become the prevailing faction, carrying the greatest sway in the church. So the errors, abuses and superstitions of the Church of Rome did not properly pertain to the Church of Rome, but rather to the papal faction. And it is that faction which had been guilty of heresy and schism.

Thirdly, Field shows that there were those in every age who complained of these corruptions. He finds and demonstrates examples from every past era of the western church. Luther was very far from being the first complainant and, as we shall see, one particular and prominent 'proto-reformer' was Jean Gerson. Field makes no claim that any such early 'reformer' was free from all error – least of all Gerson who, he says, being 'carried away' with the sway of his time held certain grave errors as did all his other examples. But Field's principal argument is that every error was always complained about by some, and that every protestant doctrine was always upheld by some, and significantly so.

Fourthly, Field asserts that, on the basis of the foregoing, the Church of Rome was and remained a true church of God at every stage until the Reformation, because there were always those in it who held the orthodox apostolic faith, in its various components, without error or schism. We recall that for Field, 'free of error' means 'free from any universally-held error', and likewise 'free of schism' means 'free of universally-enjoined' schism. And in asserting that the Church of Rome always upheld every vital component of protestant belief, he does not mean that the entire Church of Rome upheld it, but that it was significantly upheld somewhere, by certain worthy spokesmen, all the time.

Field is clear on the question of whether the Tridentine Church of Rome of his day can be considered a true church – it cannot – given that all the error and schism, as Field saw it, in pre-Trent Rome was sealed as the official doctrine of Rome, whereas before it was only the doctrine of a faction. In an appendix published with the 1610 Book 5, Field answers the anonymous pamphlet *The First Part of*

*Protestants Proofes*,<sup>86</sup> now attributed to the recusant Richard Broughton. This work attacks Field (and other protestants), hence Field's response. In addressing Broughton's second chapter, in which the latter sets out to prove that 'the Roman Church ever was, and still is the true Church of Christ',<sup>87</sup> claiming Field to have 'proved' it himself in his 1606 work, Field shows that all four of Broughton's 'proofs', as he detected them in Field's Books 1-4 are invalid. First, Field had insisted that supreme authority in the church rests in a general council; but Rome cannot claim its councils as general, because it had excluded all the churches of the East. Secondly, Field had insisted, with Article 19, that in a true church the 'pure word of God is preached [etc.]', and this did not apply to Rome. Thirdly, that some error in a church, 'not fundamental', does not disqualify it as a true church also does not apply to Rome because its error is fundamental.

Fourthly, and most importantly, Field denies Broughton's claim that he, Field, had declared the Church of Rome, now (post-Trent), to be the true church of God. Broughton's assumption is that the Church of Rome now is the same as in Luther's time, and if it was a true church then, it is a true church now. Field declares confidently, 'the Roman Church is not the same now that it was when Luther began'.<sup>88</sup> To demonstrate this, Field observes that 'the Roman Church that then was consisted of two sorts of men: of the one as true living members; of the other [...] divided from them, being a dangerous faction in the midst of her, seeking her destruction'.<sup>89</sup> The first 'special' sort were 'they only that believed rightly touching the most material points of the Christian religion, and wished for the reformation of superstitious abuses'.<sup>90</sup> But the 'dangerous faction' were they who had 'brought in new and strange errors, and a new kind of tyrannical government'.<sup>91</sup>

Field now reaches the crux of his argument against Broughton: 'the errors that we condemn were taught in the Roman Church that was when Luther began, but they were not the doctrines of that Church; but these the errors are of the doctrines of the present [Tridentine] Roman Church'.<sup>92</sup> For where, before, errors were held, they were only held and promulgated by a faction, but opposed by others who would not accept them. The 'special sort' were they who were 'in such sort in the house

<sup>86</sup> Richard Broughton, *The First Part of Protestants Proofes, for Catholikes Religion and Recusancy taken only from the writings, of such Protestant Doctors and Divines of England, as have beene published in the raigne of his Majesty over this Kingdome* ('Paris': English Secret Press, 1607).

<sup>87</sup> (5App.Pt3/iv.518)

<sup>88</sup> (5App.Pt3/iv.522)

<sup>89</sup> (5App.Pt3/iv.524)

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>91</sup> (5App.Pt3/iv.525)

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*

of God, that that they also are the house of God' (quoting Augustine); the 'dangerous faction' were they who are 'in the house, that they pertain not to the frame and fabric of it'.<sup>93</sup>

This leads Field to an interesting and perhaps unique distinction, found only here in Field's writings, between a church that is *verē ecclesia*, 'truly a church', and a church that is *vera ecclesia*, 'a true church'.<sup>94</sup> The pre-Tridentine Church of Rome was in all respects *verē ecclesia*, but only *vera ecclesia* in respect of 'her best and principal parts', that is, the 'multitude of men holding a saving profession of the truth in Christ.'<sup>95</sup> Joseph Hall observed this solitary occurrence of this *verē / vera* distinction in his 'Apologeticall Advertisement' printed at the end of the second edition of his *The Olde Religion*, in an attempt to pacify certain protestant detractors who had felt he had gone too far in acknowledging Rome as a true church.<sup>96</sup> Hall quotes Field at length from his response to Broughton, concluding: 'so the present Roman Church is still in some sort a part of the visible Church of God, but no otherwise than other societies of heretics are, in that it retaineth the profession of some parts of heavenly truth [etc.]'.<sup>97</sup> Thus Hall appeals to Field in defending his own defence of Rome as being in a certain, very limited sense a part of the church visible. Hall further clarified his stance the next year in his *The Reconciler*.<sup>98</sup>

Field's conclusion is clear: 'we neither acknowledge that Papists [...] can ever be saved so living and dying; nor that the present Roman Church is the true church of Christ.'<sup>99</sup> This *verē / vera* distinction, then, amounts to a clarification, but not to a change in Field's thought. The new distinction does not amount to a variation in what he has said before.

Finally, then, the Reformation did not create a new church, but rather sought to clear the existing true church of God of its errors and abuses. Thus the protestant church now is the direct and legitimate continuation of the former Church of Rome. Our church, says Field, is that which it always had been – namely, the apostolic, orthodox western church, cleared of its errors and abuses. And thus it is the protestant churches of Field's day (in continuance with the orthodox and uncorrupted part of the historical Church of Rome), and not the papist faction of the Church of Rome (and thus

<sup>93</sup> (5App.Pt3/iv.526)

<sup>94</sup> (5App.Pt3/iv.524)

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>96</sup> Joseph Hall, 'Apologeticall Advertisement', in *The Olde Religion*, 2<sup>nd</sup> 1628 edition, 203. Hall quotes Field again in this 'Advertisement' at 213.

<sup>97</sup> (5App.Pt3/iv.527). Hall's full quotation runs from 'But will some man say, is the Roman Church at this day no part of the Church of God?' through to 'to the salvation of the souls of many thousand infants', to which Hall appends a simple ', &c'. In fact, Field continues 'that die after they are baptized, before she have poisoned them with her errors'. I comment on this truncation by Hall in chapter 11.2.

<sup>98</sup> Joseph Hall, *The Reconciler or an Epistle Pacificatorie* (London: 1629).

<sup>99</sup> (5App.Pt3/iv.571). This is just one page before the very last page of Field's published works.

not the Church of Rome of Field's day), which holds the faith first delivered by the apostles to the early church.

Having completed writing his Book 3, Field subsequently felt the need further to defend this major component of his thesis – that the 'protestant church' had continued within the Church of Rome all down through history, not without considerable irony, of course. To this end he wrote the appendix to Book 3,<sup>100</sup> which was published with Books 1-4 in 1606. This appendix adduces further evidence, by way of examples, to defend his thesis. Sometime later, probably after 1610 (when he published Book 5), and possibly after 1614 (when, it appears, Books 1-4 were *re*-printed), he began to work on expanding this appendix. The new version, substantially longer than the first, was only half completed when Field died in 1616 – but was published by his son Nathaniel, with the second edition of the whole work, in 1628. Furthermore, in the same late period, Field also revised chapter 1 of Book 3, massively extending it to 56 pages in which he defends his view that all the eastern churches were and remain essentially orthodox in essential points of doctrine, and that the Church of Rome had no right to damn all these churches. This peremptory dismissal of all other world churches apart from Rome scandalises Field:

'All these churches [...] in number many [...] in continuance most ancient, in defence of the Christian faith constant and undaunted [...], the bishop of Rome, with his adherents, judgeth to be heretics, or at least schismatics, and consequently to have no hope of salvation'.<sup>101</sup>

In the remainder of the long Book 3, Field progressively examines various heresies and abuses of morality, discipline and government in order to show *both* that the papal faction had been guilty of these corruptions *and* that the true church had never been guilty of them, but the papal faction only. Field notes that the present unreformed Church of Rome offers its own counter arguments, arguing that it – and not the reformed, protestant church – is the true church. Field also gives much space in the remainder of Book 3 to refuting such arguments. But we turn now to the role Gerson plays in the argument of the next few chapters of Field's Book 3. A few examples will suffice.

### 10.5 Jean Gerson and Theophilus Higgons

We have noted Field's view that the 'errors reproved by Luther' and the 'abuses removed by him' were 'long before by all good men complained of, and a reformation desired'.<sup>102</sup> Field names some

<sup>100</sup> 'An Appendix, wherein it is clearely proved that the Latine, or west church in which the pope tyrannized, was, and continued a true orthodoxe and protestant church; and that the devisers and maintainers of Romish errorrs and superstitious abuses, were onely a faction in the same, at the time when Luther, not without the applause of all good men, published his propositions against the prophane abuse of Papall indulgences' (ii.2).

<sup>101</sup> (3.2/i.153).

<sup>102</sup> '[T]he true Church of God, before Luther or others of that sort were heard of in the world [is] that wherein all our Fathers lived and died; wherein none of the errors reproved by Luther ever found general, uniform, and full

of these ‘good men’ as Wickliffe, Jerome of Prague and Hus – and also Gerson, to whom we now turn. Field reports Gerson as having campaigned for reform at the Council of Constance – with little success – and he quotes from Gerson’s own writings to this end. Gerson complains of ‘false opinions’ and ‘sundry lewd assertions’ which the Council had failed to condemn because of the ‘mighty faction’ within it.<sup>103</sup> Field notes that Gerson bitterly despairs of the reform he earnestly desired – at least considering ‘things standing as they then did’.

Gerson’s complaints about his church ranged expansively over many abuses and errors. They include a comprehensive assessment of moral corruptions, abuse of power, injustices and lack of discipline – for example, especially in chapter 10.<sup>104</sup> But importantly, Gerson complains not only about generalities, but condemns specifics such as the ‘the ambition, pride, and covetousness of Rome’<sup>105</sup> and the behaviour of the popes. Of these, Gerson has boldly affirmed that they have sought their own advancement rather than ‘the good of God’s people’,<sup>106</sup> assuming for themselves far too much power. Gerson wished that ‘all things were brought back to that state they were in in the times of the apostles’, or at least back to Gregory the Great, when the many bishops of the Church of Rome were permitted without interference to manage the affairs of their diocese. Field strengthens his defence of Gerson by quoting other Latin divines such as d’Ailly, Cusanus, Picus Mirandula, ‘and innumerable more of the best, wisest, and holiest men the Church had’. These men, with Gerson, ‘wished and expected a reformation.’<sup>107</sup>

To them can be added Gregory of Rimini who, Field reports, had argued that Pelagianism had been taught in the church, in its acceptance of the power of men to do moral good without the gift of

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approbation; in which all the abuses removed by him were long before by all good men complained of, and a reformation desired.’ (3.8/i.171).

<sup>103</sup> (3.8/i.172-3), quoting Jean Gerson, *de Potestate Ecclesiastica (consid. 12)*, and *Dial. Apolog. (judicium de Concilio Constantiniensi)*.

<sup>104</sup> ‘It is vain, saith Gerson, [from Gerson, *Declarat. Defectuum virorum Ecclesiasticorum* (II, 314)] that some object the Church is founded on a rock, and therefore nothing can be amiss either in the doctrine or discipline of it, nothing that should need any reformation. “If it be so,” said he, “then where [...] is the superfluous pomp and princely state of cardinals and bishops, making them forget that they are men? What say they to that abomination, that one man holdeth two or three hundred ecclesiastical benefices? That the sword of excommunication is so easily drawn out against the poor for every trifle; [...] That strangers are appointed by the pope to have cure of souls, not understanding the language of them over whom they are set, nor living amongst them?” “Open your eyes,” saith he, [from Gerson, *de Directione Cordis. Consideratione 16, et sequentibus*. (III, 471)] “and see if the houses of nuns be not stews of filthy harlots [...]; the feasts of new saints being more religiously kept than of the blessed apostles. [...] Consider the diversities of opinions, as of the conception of Mary, and sundry other things. See if there be not intolerable superstition in the worshipping of saints [...]; even as we shall find, in the decrees and decretals, a monk more severely punished for going without his cowl, than for committing adultery or sacrilege.” (3.10/i.181-182).

<sup>105</sup> (3.11/i.182).

<sup>106</sup> “In imitation of Lucifer, they will be adored and worshipped as Gods. Neither do they think themselves subject to any; but are as the sons of Belial that have cast off the yoke, not enduring, whatsoever they do, that anyone should ask them why they do so? They neither fear God nor reverence man” [from Gerson, *Post Tractatum, De Unitate Ecclesiae*] (3.11/i.183).

<sup>107</sup> (3.11/i.184). ‘So that he [Gerson] is neither pronounced to be an heretic, nor a murderer, by Luther, as Master Higgons untruly saith he is.’

special grace from God, and, Field adds, 'The same doth Gerson report'.<sup>108</sup> The importance of this is that both Gregory and Gerson found themselves facing a very considerable and forceful opposition. This is known to be the case from independent reports of the Council of Constance. Although that Council succeeded in ending the Great Schism, other matters of needful reformation did not happen, despite Gerson and d'Ailly being prominent contributors to the proceedings. They led the powerful French delegation and together have been described as 'the soul of the council'.<sup>109</sup> It is important for us to note that Gerson, campaigning for reform, did not go along with the main sway of the conference. In particular, in Field's view, he did not go along with the condemnation of Hus – Field returns to this theme prominently in his final appendix to the whole work. Higgons is scandalised by Field's claiming Gerson for his own cause, but Field responds, 'I think it will not be easily proved by Master Higgons that Gerson had any hand in the turbulent and furious proceeding against the persons of these men [Hus and Jerome of Prague], howsoever he might mislike some things that they were charged with'. Higgons has claimed, erroneously according to Field, that Luther pronounced Gerson to be a heretic.<sup>110</sup> Further, Higgons has claimed that Gerson 'utterly detested' the reformation brought about through Luther and those following (quoting Higgons' words – clearly Higgons is declaring what he thought Gerson would have thought if he could have seen ahead).<sup>111</sup> But Field does not claim that Gerson is, ahead of time, fully reformed in his mind in all matters of doctrine. Field grants that Gerson had not seen the error of the likes of transubstantiation or the invocation of saints.<sup>112</sup> But even here, Field denies Gerson to have 'erred heretically', because of Field's distinction between pertinacious and non-pertinacious heresy outside of his (Field's) central core of non-negotiable truth. In Field's estimation Gerson, like all the other many 'worthy guides' whom Field allies to his main cause, had been carried away by the sway of his own times, protesting against errors and abuses as far as he saw them, but not seeing the entire corpus of error as the later reformers eventually perceived them. So Field is adamant: 'If Master Higgons think that I produce Gerson as a man fully professing in every point of doctrine as we do, he wholly mistaketh me'.<sup>113</sup>

<sup>108</sup> '[T]ouching the power of nature to do things morally good, and to fulfil the law, without concurrence of special grace [...] the heresies of Pelagius were taught in the Church; and that, not by a few or contemptible men, but so many and of so great place, that he almost feared to follow the doctrine of the Fathers, and oppose himself against them therein. The same doth Gerson report [...]' (3.8/i.172).

<sup>109</sup> Catholic Encyclopaedia on the Council of Constance. See <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/04288a.htm> (accessed 30 December 2017).

<sup>110</sup> (5.App/iv.373).

<sup>111</sup> '[H]e undertaketh to prove that Gerson (whom I bring in as a worthy guide of God's Church in the time wherein he lived, and one that wished the reformation of things amiss) "utterly detested the reformation that hath been transacted by Luther, Zuinglius, and the rest."' (5.App/iv.354).

<sup>112</sup> '[T]hough it were granted that he erred in the matter of transubstantiation, invocation of saints, and some such-like things, yet will it never be proved that he erred heretically, or that he was not willing to yield to the truth in these or any other things wherein he was deceived, when it should be made to appear unto him.' (5.App/iv.354).

<sup>113</sup> (5.App/iv.354). Also: 'It is true that I esteem of Gerson as of a most learned, judicious and godly man, that mourned for the confusions he saw in the Church in his time, that reprov'd many abuses, gave testimony to many parts of heavenly truth then contradicted by those carnal men [...] who counted gain to be godliness, and scorned all that lived as

## 10.6 Summary of this Chapter

To summarise, Higgons has complained bitterly about Field quoting Gerson for his own cause. Then, point by point, Field answers his critic, showing how, in his (Field's) opinion, Higgons has misunderstood him or has misconstrued Gerson himself. Field allows that Gerson is not fully reformed by any means, but that Gerson eminently represents the sizable number of advocates of reformed doctrine down through the ages. He lists an impressive number of such protestant doctrines fully affirmed by Gerson:

I said, and still constantly affirm, that God preserved his true Church in the midst of all the errors and confusions of the papacy; that the errors condemned by us never found general and constant allowance in the days of our fathers; and that there were many who held the foundation, and, according to the light of knowledge which God vouchsafed them, wished the reformation of such things as were amiss [. . .]; of which number I reckon Gerson to be one of eminent sort and rank. For this worthy divine believed as we do, that all our inherent righteousness is imperfect; yea, [. . .] that it cannot endure the trial of God's severe judgement; that we must trust in the only mercy and goodness of God [. . .]; that the pope hath no power to dispose of the kingdoms of the world [. . .]; that he is subject to error [. . .]; that Christian perfection consisteth neither in poverty nor riches, but in a mind resolved to regard these things no farther than they stand with the love of God and serve for the advancement of his glory, and the good of men.<sup>114</sup>

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beseemeth Christians, traducing them as hypocrites, and I know not what else. Yet I think no man will infer, upon any commendation that I have given him, that I must of necessity embrace as true whatsoever he saith.' (5.App/iv.286-287).

<sup>114</sup> (5.App/iv.354-355) (drawn from Gerson's *De Consolate. Theolog.*, *Tract. de Vita Spirit. Anim.*, *Tract. de Indulgent*, *De Potest. Eccles.*, *De Auferibilitate Pap.*, *De Consil. Et Stat. Perfect.*).

## Chapter 11

### – Field’s Later Reception –

#### 11. Abstract of this chapter

This study would not be complete without some attention to Field’s later reception. In his day, Field was much admired, as shown in previous chapters. But unlike Hooker, Field has received relatively little attention in the centuries since. There are some notable exceptions, such as Avis, Coleridge and Jones-Davies, referred to in previous chapters. This chapter will take three other scholars from the nineteenth, twentieth and twenty-first centuries respectively, Newman, Milton and Dawn, who have given Field noteworthy treatment. Nonetheless, it remains the case that other writers of the modern eras, although many do refer piecemeal to Field, to give either brief biographical or doctrinal snippets, their references are sparse, and I address a sample of such to demonstrate my own lament that Field has been relatively neglected in our day.

#### 11.1 Newman’s and Brewer’s employment of Field

One Victorian theologian who valued Field’s *Of the Church* was John Henry Newman, the leader of the Tractarian Movement (or Oxford Movement) until it waned after the publication of the final and controversial Tract 90 in 1841 and Newman’s subsequent conversion to the Roman church in 1845. Not only do we know that Newman read Field’s tome, more than once, but he (and also Pusey) quoted Field in several of the *Tracts for the Times*.<sup>1</sup> Newman employs Field in Tracts 15, 76, 82 and 90, Pusey in Tract 81. It would appear that Newman counted Field as belonging to the same theological school as High Church Caroline divines such as Laud, Hammond and Cosin; but this must be challenged.

Kenneth Parker, writing on Newman’s use of the Caroline divines, notes that Newman borrowed Field’s *Of the Church* (1635 edition) from Oriel College library in July 1833,<sup>2</sup> returning it a full three

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<sup>1</sup> The *Tracts for the Times* are viewable at <http://www.newmanreader.org/works/times/> and at <http://anglicanhistory.org/tracts/> (accessed December 2017), or in William G. Hutchison, (ed.), *The Oxford Movement, being a selection from Tracts for the Times* (London and New York: Walter Scott Publishing, ?1906).

<sup>2</sup> Oriel College Library, *Register of Books Borrowed*, no pagination, see at ‘July 1833’; Kenneth L. Parker, ‘Newman’s Individualistic Use of the Caroline Divines in the *Via Media*’ in Magill, Gerard, (ed.), *Discourse and Context: An*



months later, and reread it in August 1836, a month during which he was preoccupied with study of various Caroline divines such as Andrewes, Hammond and Thorndike. Until that year, Parker observes, Newman's study of this school 'appears to have been casual and unsystematic at best'; but in August 1836 it was 'frenzied'. Despite Newman's enthusiasm for these divines, Parker continues, his familiarity with some of the leading anti-Calvinists (such as Laud)<sup>3</sup> was minimal, and his understanding of their school of theology 'seems to have been superficial at best'; Parker observes, 'one appreciates better why many High Church Anglicans of his day questioned Newman's interpretations of their tradition'.<sup>4</sup>

I am inclined to agree, given that in January 1837, Newman wrote, concerning his 1836 *Lectures*,<sup>5</sup> 'I have tried, as far as may be, to follow the line of doctrine marked out by our great divines, of whom perhaps I have chiefly followed Bramhall, then Laud, Hammond, Field, Stillingfleet, Beveridge and others of the same school'.<sup>6</sup> This claim warrants examination. Can Field be placed in the same 'school' as the others of this list? Surely not. Field can hardly be identified with the proto-'Arminianism' of Andrewes or the later actual 'Arminianism' of Laud and his circle. Field was an infralapsarian (*avant la lettre*), as mentioned in chapter 6, and a strict (albeit moderate) Calvinist who held to absolute predestination, limited atonement (in the sense that Christ died for the elect alone), and to the perseverance of the saints, as ably demonstrated by Dawn in his thoroughgoing study of Field's view of predestination.<sup>7</sup> These doctrines can hardly be averred of the Arminians (or, Tyacke's term, 'Anti-Calvinists'). Dawn summarises the contrast thus: 'Field and Andrewes held divergent views on the doctrine of grace'.<sup>8</sup> Field's infralapsarianism made his Calvinism softer than that of supralapsarians such as Perkins and Whitaker, and thus of the Lambeth Articles of 1593, and Dawn notes that in certain doctrines Field was closer to (although 'still quite distant from') Andrewes – for example, Field held there to be a 'universal grace in the gospel call' (as also Andrewes), but (*contra* Andrewes) Field held there to be 'two kinds of grace in the gospel call' ('sufficient [in the gospel call] and efficacious [for the elect]').<sup>9</sup>

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*Interdisciplinary Study of John Henry Newman* (Carbondale and Edwardsville, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1993), 38-39.

<sup>3</sup> Parker, 'Newman [...] Caroline Divines', 42, n.30.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 38-40.

<sup>5</sup> Newman, *Lectures on the Prophetic Office of the Church*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edn, published as *Via Media*, vol. 1 (John Henry Newman, *The Via Media of the Anglican Church*, 2 vols (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1901-08)).

<sup>6</sup> John Henry Newman, *The Letters and Diaries of John Henry Newman*, ed. by Charles Stephen Dessain and others, 31 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961-1976), vi, 7.

<sup>7</sup> Dawn, *Predestination and the Lord's Supper*, §4.3 and 4.4, 138-165.

<sup>8</sup> Dawn, *Ibid.* The quotation is at 160.

<sup>9</sup> Dawn, *ibid.* The quotations are at 158, 157, 159 (x2), respectively.

The point of the preceding observations is to raise a question mark over how well Newman understood Field's theological perspective (or, for that matter, that of any of the Caroline divines). It is not credible to align Field with divines such as Andrewes and Hammond, save only that Field was an episcopalian churchman as they were (but so were the Calvinists Whitgift, Whitaker, Bancroft, etc.), and that had he lived Field would likely have aligned himself with the Royalist cause (as likely would Whitgift and Bancroft, and as did the later bishop of Lincoln, and accomplished casuist, Robert Sanderson, who also cannot be aligned unequivocally with the anti-Calvinists, but who was an object of Newman's interest along with the other Caroline divines mentioned here).

Sanderson is worth noting, because Parker, earlier in his essay, quotes from a letter, mentioning Sanderson, written to Newman by one Samuel Rickards, a decade earlier than his month-long foray into the works of the Caroline divines as mentioned above. Although, wrote Rickards, 'our old writers are excellent men to keep company with [...] they seldom give you a conclusion so wrought out'<sup>10</sup> that it is useful (for establishing a coherent theology). Two exceptions are named ('almost the only'),<sup>11</sup> Hooker and Sanderson, and rightly so, given the highly systematic and analytical nature of their writings (Sanderson's work on logic became seminal in the late seventeenth century). I am inclined to believe that Rickards overlooked Field here, for he, profoundly delivering coherent conclusions 'wrought out', undoubtedly is another 'exception', for the same reasons, as I trust this study amply demonstrates.

We turn, then, to a brief survey of Newman's use of Field. In Tract 15, written with William Palmer, Field's notable view, that current Tridentine errors and heresies were never 'constantly delivered' in pre-Reformation Rome, was quoted unexceptionably,<sup>12</sup> with reference also to Field's 'Appendix' to book 3, 'where he proves all this'. The only quibble I would raise towards Newman's use of Field here is that he ascribes 'all the errors of the middle ages' as being 'but the errors of individuals, though of large numbers of Christians', whereas Field strengthens the point, aggregating these 'individuals' to the prevailing 'dangerous faction' that 'brought the Church into miserable bondage'.

In Tract 76, on the subject of the sacrament of baptism, Newman quotes from over 40 Anglican divines, a few clearly protestant, such as Jewel and Field, and many clearly Tractarian, such as

<sup>10</sup> Recorded in Newman, *Letters and Diaries*, I, 311.

<sup>11</sup> Parker, 'Newman [...] Caroline Divines', 40

<sup>12</sup> See the penultimate paragraph of the Tract, numbered '2.', or see Hutchison, (ed.), *The Oxford Movement*, 74. Field's words quoted are '[If they reply, that that Church was theirs and not ours [...] we answer,] that none of those points of false doctrine and error which Romanists [Field: they] now maintain, and we condemn, were the doctrines of the [Field: that] Church before the Reformation [these three words added to Field] constantly delivered or generally received by all them that were of it, but doubtfully broached, and devised without all certain resolution, or factiously defended by some certain only, who as a dangerous faction adulterated the sincerity of the Christian verity, and brought the Church into miserable bondage', which are at (3.6/1.166).

Beveridge, Thorndike and Hammond, or Caroline (or pre-Caroline) divines such as Andrewes, Bramhall and Laud. Field is quoted briefly and, again, unexceptionably, observing the fault of those who in Patristic days delayed their baptism.<sup>13</sup>

Tract 81, which is by Pusey, similarly quotes over 60 divines, including (as well as the above-named) the protestant churchmen Morton and Bilson. This tract, though, defends the doctrine of the eucharistic sacrifice, and Field is employed to this purpose using lengthy extracts from his 'Answer to Mr Brereley's Objection concerning the Mass',<sup>14</sup> and a short extract from Field's final Appendix, answering Higgons.<sup>15</sup> Again, it is no surprise that the Tractarians are able to employ not only their own spokesmen to their end, but pre-Laudian protestants too, for such certainly had no problem with the notion of eucharistic sacrifice, so long as the correct interpretation was placed upon it rather than the notion of propitiatory sacrifice. It will be profitable for us to examine briefly how Field justifies seeing the Eucharist in sacrificial terms, for it illustrates Field's propensity to place protestant and Lutheran-Calvinist unifying constructions upon disputed terminology. In typically thorough analytical style, Field makes a two-fold argument against Brereley's objection to the protestants,<sup>16</sup> showing how despite the papists' 'blasphemous construction'<sup>17</sup> upon the Mass, the historic Latin Canon of the Mass does not itself necessarily entail such a construction. The 'blasphemous construction' 'whereof the 'Papists fable',<sup>18</sup> rejected by Field and all protestants, is, of course, the Eucharist being a propitiatory sacrifice or 'any such new real sacrificing of CHRIST, as is now imagined'.<sup>19</sup>

This notwithstanding, Field, citing Luther's view 'that the words may be understood in such a sense, as is not to be disliked',<sup>20</sup> is very happy to accept the term 'sacrifice' as describing the mass, albeit in two very different senses. First, in the canon, the elements of bread and wine are 'offered in the name of the people [...] as being [...] symbols of that inward Sacrifice, whereby they dedicate and give themselves and all that they have unto GOD', i.e., the 'Sacrifice of praise'. Secondly, the offering of the elements is a 'sacrifice' in, and only in, that the elements connote, or represent, 'the crucified body of Christ [...] and the Blood which He once shed for our sakes', and they are offered

<sup>13</sup> Field's words quoted are the text from 'This was the fault of sundry in the Primitive Church' to 'and to give life and strength unto it.' (1.12/i.41).

<sup>14</sup> The opening section of the Appendix to Book 3; the extracts commence at (3App/ii.13).

<sup>15</sup> The extract commences 'Yet let us see [...]', (5App/iv.284).

<sup>16</sup> John Brereley, *The Protestants Apologie for the Roman Church* (St Omer: 1608).

<sup>17</sup> (5App/iv.284).

<sup>18</sup> (3App/ii.22).

<sup>19</sup> (3App/ii.59).

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

'representatively' 'before the eyes of the Almighty', that the 'faithful communicants', 'commemorating the Death and Passion of Christ', 'fly unto it as their only stay and refuge'.<sup>21</sup>

The point of this analysis is that the Tractarian Pusey quotes Field as typifying, contra Tridentine Rome, a typical protestant, indeed Lutheran, understanding of the nature of the Eucharist, and, indeed, the Latin canon of the mass, as a sacrifice, but not a propitiatory sacrifice. This is not surprising, for the Oxford movement were no more sympathetic to the eucharistic doctrines of Rome than more Calvinistic schools within protestantism. But this does not mean, of course, that Field can be identified with Pusey's school in other respects.

Newman himself concedes that quoting divines such as Field piecemeal does not imply that he, Newman, accepts the entire corpus of their doctrinal system. In a passing reference to Field in Tract 82, Newman admits that '[t]here are things in Jeremy Taylor, Hooker, Ussher, Laud, and Field, which one may well scruple to admit'.<sup>22</sup> This is important to recognise in any study of Field, for he is not easily categorised; for example, after minute analysis, Dawn shows how difficult it is to place Field precisely – fully-fledged moderate, conformist Calvinist, indeed, yet infralapsarian; 'it is clear that Field occupied a distinctive position on the doctrine of grace vis-à-vis English churchmen of his era',<sup>23</sup> and was 'something of a bridge between'<sup>24</sup> the Calvinists and the proto-Arminians; this leads Dawn to the conclusion, 'the utility of tidy religious categories is limited'.<sup>25</sup>

The final and controversial Tract 90, by Newman, prompted the break-up of the Oxford Movement. In it he attempts to reconcile the 39 Articles of Religion of the Church of England with Tractarian theology, taking certain of the Articles and attempting to place a Tractarian construction upon the language employed in them. This was widely considered a boldness too far, the movement began to disintegrate, and this led to Newman's notable conversion to Rome. In Tract 90, addressing Articles of Religion numbers 6 and 20, on the authority of scripture and of the church, he adduces Field for his cause, in the matter of the identity of the Rule of Faith. Newman is keen to demonstrate that the term *Rule of Faith* cannot simplistically be identified with scripture. Some protestants had indeed sought to make that equation, out of their desire to promote the absolute authority and sufficiency of scripture in all matters of faith and conduct, and out of their rejection of any attempt to weaken

<sup>21</sup> (3App/II.60-65).

<sup>22</sup> Tract 82, a 'Letter to a Magazine on the Subject of Dr. Pusey's Tract on Baptism', Part II, no. 5 of its closing paragraphs.

<sup>23</sup> Dawn, *Predestination*, 158, §4.4.

<sup>24</sup> Dawn, *Predestination*, 160, §4.4.2.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

the doctrine of scripture and replace a word-based credal faith with a doctrine of sacramental grace, or at least to emphasise the latter at the expense of the priority of the written word.

Other protestants, including Field, realised that this leads to the problem of interpretation; if the *Rule of Faith* is equated with scripture alone, and no complementary hermeneutical principles are admitted, then inevitably there will be endless unresolvable debates as to the correct meaning of the scripture text. Field solves this problem without weakening his protestant understanding of the supreme authority of scripture, by expanding the *Rule of Faith* to encompass the likes of the Apostles' Creed, the central non-negotiable core of essential 'such things as every Christian is bound expressly to believe', the proportionate internal consistency of the corpus of belief, and the consistent and constant consent of the principal theologians throughout Christian history. He does this in order to ensure that scripture is not abandoned to the multifarious interpretations that countless theological schools might place upon it, but instead is safeguarded by the constant witness of Christian history against all such 'gainsayers [who were] noted for singularity, novelty, and division'. It is precisely this strategy that lies behind Field's insistence that the protestant church survived in unbroken continuation within the Church of Rome down through every century until the Reformation. Field makes the above case in a chapter of his fourth book entitled 'Of the rule of the Church's judgement'.<sup>26</sup> Adjacent chapters enlarge upon Field's insistence that the authentic Christian faith is a credal faith founded upon the supreme and entirely sufficient authority of scripture, delivered by the apostles, verified by the early Fathers, and interpreted thereafter by consistent, common consent with no new addition. For example, in another chapter, he explains that Augustine's famous dictum that he 'would not believe the gospel, if the authority of the Church did not move him', need mean no more than that it was the church that 'had been an introduction to him'.<sup>27</sup>

In Tract 90, Newman quotes at length an earlier, unspecified published paper which in turn quotes Field at length from the chapter alluded to above,<sup>28</sup> with the express purpose of demonstrating the inequation between scripture and the rule of faith. At one level, Newman's use of Field is unexceptionable – after all, for the reasons explained above, Field acknowledges scripture *plus* common, historic consent as being the rule. But it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that Newman

<sup>26</sup> (4.14/II.441-4). The quotations in this paragraph are from this chapter.

<sup>27</sup> (4.9/II.427-8), the chapter is entitled 'Of the meaning of those words of Augustine, that he would not believe the gospel, if the authority of the Church did not move him'. Other chapters here concern 'their error who think the Church may make new articles of faith' (4.12/II.434), 'their error who think the authority of the Church is the rule of our faith' (4.6/II.409), and 'their error who prefer the authority of the Church before the scripture' (4.11/II.431).

<sup>28</sup> From (4.14/II.441-444). The lengthy quotation is from 'it remaineth to show what is the rule' to 'judge of things by the scripture alone' – almost the whole chapter.

seeks to promote the authority of 'catholic tradition' (his term)<sup>29</sup> with its emphasis on sacramental grace, at the expense of the priority of the word of scripture; for otherwise, Newman's use of Field is pointless – it knocks down a straw man – and in any case Field most assuredly agrees that 'Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation'.<sup>30</sup> In the chapter quoted at length, Field equates 'the doctrine of the Christian faith' with 'this divine knowledge',<sup>31</sup> and equates the 'revelation of divine truth' with scripture ('whatsoever books were delivered unto us').<sup>32</sup> Having insisted that herein lies the only 'direction of our faith', he then affirms the importance of the consistent witness of 'the most famous [fathers and divines who] have constantly and uniformly delivered as a matter of faith, [...] as received of them that went before'.<sup>33</sup> But he is careful to say that this latter aspect of the rule of faith is not 'equal with the former' – he insists simply that this constant witness ensures the 'full consent of the people of God' as representing the Christian faith as 'needs be from those first authors and founders of our Christian profession'.<sup>34</sup>

In conclusion, this survey of Newman's use of Field is for the most part unexceptionable, save to note that it would be a mistake thereby to conclude that Field was in some sense a Tractarian *avant la lettre*. He was not. Certainly, he was an anti-Tridentine Anglican conformist, as the Tractarians were too (at least prior to Newman's conversion). Thus Newman appropriately quotes Field again in a letter preserved in his *Via Media 2*,<sup>35</sup> with the object of rehearsing Field's view that Rome *before* the Reformation was a protestant church with a heretical (but dominant) papal faction within it, but that Rome *after* Trent is a heretical church.<sup>36</sup> But Field is firmly in the category of those protestants who upheld the Christian faith as being scripturally founded, whereby God's grace is mediated through faith in the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ; although, with other such Anglican divines of his era, Field held the sacraments to be 'means of grace', this refers in Field's scheme to the comforting and confirming grace for the Christian worshipper entailed by the rehearsal of the gospel in the 'representation' of Christ's sacrifice at the Eucharist; it does not refer to justifying grace. Likewise, as shown above, Field understands the eucharistic sacrifice in very different terms from the Tractarians. It is commonly accepted that one prime characteristic of the Tractarians, as of the anti-Calvinist

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<sup>29</sup> Tract 90, §1

<sup>30</sup> Article of Religion, number 6.

<sup>31</sup> (4.14/II.442).

<sup>32</sup> (4.14/II.443).

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>35</sup> Newman, *Via Media 2*, ch. 6, 'A letter addressed to the Rev. the Margaret Professor of Divinity', §7.

<sup>36</sup> Field's text quoted is from (3.6/I.166), 'none of those points [...] miserable bondage', misattributed by Newman as being from (3App), though they are referred to there; and (3.47/I.358-360), 'There is, therefore, a great difference [...] hope of their salvation'.

Caroline divines, was to move away from a view of God's grace mediated through the preaching, and therefore priority, of the word (of scripture). Field most certainly did not belong to such a movement.

James Kirby, in his *Historians and the Church of England: Religion and Historical Scholarship, 1870–1920*, observes that

Anglican historical scholarship in this period was not characterized by Protestant triumphalism, but rather by a belief in the English Church as ancient, continuous, and national. This view, espoused particularly by the High Church, rested on the assumption of a continuity between the pre- and post-Reformation church. The need to prove this continuity led Anglican historians with this outlook to play down the extent of religious changes which occurred at the Reformation.<sup>37</sup>

The view that the continuity across the Reformation years was so great that in effect there was barely a Reformation at all is termed by Diarmaid MacCulloch 'The Myth of the English Reformation', and he challenges the myth in his article of that title.<sup>38</sup> Kirby observes that this 'myth' has a 'long Anglican pedigree',<sup>39</sup> commencing at least with the Laudian movement of the reign of Charles I, or even earlier with (arguably) the proto-Arminianism of Lancelot Andrewes.

However, as Kirby notes, not all High Church historians agreed – there was a second school of thought in their ranks. Both camps agreed that the Reformation shouldn't have happened, but some, including J.S. Brewer, did not hold to the 'myth' of the Reformation, believing that there really was a distinctive reformation, but 'repudiated the Reformation Church as a Protestant aberration'.<sup>40</sup>

John Sherren Brewer (1809-79) whilst a humanities student at Queen's College Oxford (matriculated 1827) was drawn to the Tractarian movement, and to the thinking of John Henry Newman in particular. This led him to become a student of the Caroline divines.<sup>41</sup> Brewer was ordained in 1837, but spent most of his working life in editorial work, publishing amongst other works<sup>42</sup> a new edition of Field's *Of the Church*, books 1-3, in 1843, giving it the title *The Book of the Church*, vol. 1.<sup>43</sup> In 1843, when he published Field, Brewer was firmly within the Tractarian movement, knew Newman well, and frequently corresponded with him. Later, though, after the break-up of the movement in 1845 he became more drawn to the 'liberal' theology of F.D. Maurice, whilst retaining some features of

<sup>37</sup> James Kirby, *Historians and the Church of England: Religion and Historical Scholarship, 1870–1920* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), ch.2, 165.

<sup>38</sup> Diarmaid MacCulloch, 'The Myth of the English Reformation', in *Journal of British Studies*, 30 (1991), 1-4. Kirby also notes Jean-Louis Quantin, *The Church of England and Christian Antiquity: The Construction of a Confessional Identity in the 17th Century* (Oxford: 2009), 397-9.

<sup>39</sup> Kirby, *Historians*, 166.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 165.

<sup>41</sup> See *Ibid.*, 27.

<sup>42</sup> Also, e.g., the works of John Cosin (1595-1672) and Herbert Thorndike (1597?-1672). See Kirby, *Historians*, ch.2, n.40.

<sup>43</sup> For unknown reasons, the remaining volumes did not appear subsequently.

Tractarianism.<sup>44</sup> Given Brewer was of High Church sympathy himself, and that he edited and published works by others of that stable such as *The Court of King James I* by Godfrey Goodman (1583-1656), one wonders if he counted Field as a fellow representative – was Field a Caroline divine (*avant la lettre*) in his estimation? More particularly, did Field support his view of a real but wrong-headed Reformation, or did those who held to the ‘myth’ theory have a better claim on Field? This is the question that concerns us.

In the light of our study in Field, the answer is clear. Field certainly did believe in a large measure of continuity from the historic Latin church through the years of the Reformation to his own Jacobean era. But this was decidedly in the arena of doctrine. Field's most distinctive contribution to ecclesiology was his demonstration that all those doctrines which the protestant Reformation has recovered and brought to the fore had always been upheld somewhere by someone. Protestant doctrines are not new. But those doctrines centre upon such as the priority and authority of scripture, and the centrality of the cross of Christ and the consequent proclaimed gospel. The saving grace of God mediated through God's Word preached, the hallmark of both Lutheranism and Calvinism, rather than mediated sacramentally, is Field's protestant Christianity. So the continuity through the Reformation is that *before* the Reformation the Latin church was essentially protestant (albeit largely hidden and traduced), and was protestant *after* the Reformation (but no longer hidden); not that *before* it was Roman Catholic and *after* it remained Roman Catholic. For example, Kirby quotes the ‘myth’-holder R.W. Dixon as claiming that Cranmer and his fellow martyrs died ‘for their dedication to the Prayer Book as an embodiment of “the Catholic faith”, hastily playing down their attachment to Lutheran and Calvinist doctrine’.<sup>45</sup>

Thus Brewer was clearly with those who regretted the Reformation whilst agreeing it had really happened, yet supporting Newman's argument in Tract Ninety (1841) that the Thirty-Nine Articles were reconcilable with Tridentine Catholicism. It must be wondered, then, whether Brewer had really understood Field's defence of *doctrinal* protestantism within the historic Church of Rome.

## 11.2 Anthony Milton

The scholar Anthony Milton refers to Field and his works and ecclesiology considerably more than other writers of the modern era. In his much respected *Catholic and Reformed*, published in 1995, Field is referenced in the index nearly forty times (although Field does not get particularly special treatment over against others of Field's era – Milton's work, with an impressive command of the era,

<sup>44</sup> Kirby, *Historians*, 27, and ch.2, n.38.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 169.



quotes a vast number of early-modern scholars equally frequently). These references to Field, though, can be categorised more succinctly, under a few heads, perhaps about twelve, such as 'true church', 'visibility', 'succession' and 'catholicity', according to the main subject matters of the various chapter sections containing them. A brief survey is in order, in which I shall consider a representative sample, principally of Milton's chapters 3 ('true church'), and 6 ('visibility, succession').<sup>46</sup> I should note here, though, that Milton also refers to Field a few times in his chapter 'The Church of England, Rome, and the True Church: The Demise of a Jacobean Consensus', in *The Early Stuart Church*, ed. by Kenneth Fincham.

First, Milton quotes Field several times in his chapter 3 on the question of Rome as a true church. He observes that, typically, a late-Tudor protestant verdict on this matter is usually negative, but notes that Field is able to be more generous on the grounds of his distinction between the vast majority of the Church of Rome on the one hand (the 'multitude of men holding a saving profession of the truth in Christ'),<sup>47</sup> and the papal faction on the other. Milton notes Field as leading the way in such protestant moderation on Rome, pre-Trent, as a true church. He does not mention, however, Field's subsequent clarification, as I have deemed it to be, in his fine distinction between *verē ecclesia* and *vera ecclesia*,<sup>48</sup> although he does quote from the page of *Of the Church* where Field makes the distinction.<sup>49</sup>

Milton makes the assertion, in his chapter 3, on 'Rome as a true church', that 'Field [...] seemed to imply that the church on earth and in heaven had effectively a separate membership'.<sup>50</sup> But Field does not 'seem to imply' this; rather, he clearly states it, as I have shown. Field is in no doubt, and leaves no doubt in his atomic and Aristotelian category dissection of these distinctions. If Field, ahead of its nineteenth-century day, had drawn a Venn<sup>51</sup> diagram as an illustration, with two circles to denote the church of the elect (the church invisible, or church mystical) and the church visible, he would have clearly shown that, conceding a large overlapping section, there is nonetheless a section of the invisible outside the visible (those not yet gathered in by conversion, excommunicate sectaries or individual Christians who are – in God's sight – true believers), and a section of the visible outside the invisible (feigned believers, unrepentant wicked, or damnably heretical). At no point does Field confuse these categories. Thus Milton observes Whitaker as 'charitably assum[ing] that all those in

<sup>46</sup> Anthony Milton, *Catholic and Reformed: the Roman and Protestant Churches in English Protestant Thought 1600-1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 128-172 (ch.3) and 270-321 (ch.6).

<sup>47</sup> (5App.Pt3/iv.524)

<sup>48</sup> See chapter 10.4 above.

<sup>49</sup> (5App.Pt3/iv.524); see Milton, *Catholic and Reformed*, 293.

<sup>50</sup> Anthony Milton, *Catholic and Reformed*, 130.

<sup>51</sup> John Venn, 1834-1923, was himself an Anglican clergyman in the Victorian era as well as a mathematician and philosopher, and a member of a notable family of clergy Venns. His grandfather, another John Venn, was famous as a founder of the Church Missionary Society and as an associate of the abolitionist William Wilberforce.

the visible church are elect', but claims that 'Field circumvented the need for such caveats by simply implying a more inclusive membership of the visible church'.<sup>52</sup> Yes, Field clearly states (not implies) the inclusive membership, but Field would have entirely agreed with Whitaker's charitable assumption in respect of any individual professing Christian, for it is only God who can demarcate the elect within his own counsels.

Milton suggests that '[Joseph] Hall was forced to distort references from [...] Field and others to remove suggestions that the foundation of the faith had been destroyed in Rome, or that baptized infants would be swiftly perverted'.<sup>53</sup> I find myself wondering if this is really fair. The final clause of that statement refers to Hall's having terminated a quotation from Field before a possibly unhelpful ending. I referred to this quotation by Hall above,<sup>54</sup> commencing 'But will some man say' through to 'the salvation of the souls of many thousand infants, &c. Thus hee'. Hall's '&c. Thus hee' [meaning, thus Field wrote] replaces Field's 'that die after they are baptized, before she have poisoned them with her errors'. The suggestion is that Hall is obfuscating a perceived difficulty in Field's ecclesiology: 'The only hope for salvation in the Church of Rome was thus to die immediately after baptism', Milton concludes Field's view to be, though 'Field seems to moderate this position somewhat elsewhere'.<sup>55</sup> Taken at face value, this line of Field does seem at variance with what we would normally expect from him. But as with all writers, Field *anywhere* must be exegeted in the light of Field *everywhere*, the particular in the light of the general. And Field's general position on damnable heresy, such as Rome 'poisons' her children with, is that error is only damnable if it is held pertinaciously and obstinately with full understanding of the error, yet holding to it nonetheless, and without a mind ready to be persuaded of the truth. This cannot generally be made to apply to ordinary members of the Church of Rome, but only to the stubborn papal faction and its self-aware Tridentine scholars. Hall would surely have understood this, and perhaps used his '&c' to avoid having to explain at length what Field's consistent view is. Milton states that John Downe offers 'a more reliable exposition of Field's position';<sup>56</sup> in fact, Downe does not offer an exposition, just the full uncurtailed quotation from Field (including, interestingly, Hall's 'Thus hee', causing one to wonder if he hasn't been too careful in handling Field himself). Finding one unexpected statement in an author, at variance as it at first seems with that author's general position, should surely sound a note of caution: the general position, attested throughout the author's work, must surely be given priority, and great care exercised in the case of oddities. Mining an author's work piecemeal for

<sup>52</sup> *Catholic and Reformed*, 130.

<sup>53</sup> Milton, *Catholic and Reformed*, 143.

<sup>54</sup> Chapter 10.4 above. The quotation is from Field at (5App.Pt3/iv.527), and is quoted by Hall in 'Apologetically Advertisement', in *The Olde Religion*, 2<sup>nd</sup> 1628 edition, 203 (not in *The Reconciler*, contra Milton).

<sup>55</sup> *Catholic and Reformed*, 135, citing (3.47/i.359) as an example of 'elsewhere'.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, citing John Downe, *Certain Treatises* (Oxford: 1633), Treatise 12, 42.

views on this and that must necessarily be done very cautiously, for fear that a single quotation may sound a different note to the general tenor of his overall position. Thus with Field. The main point of the statement curtailed by Hall, clear from the portion Hall does quote, is that baptism within the Church of Rome is valid (entirely typical of Field). Field then proceeds to lament that Rome then poisons the baptised with error; but not necessarily damnably, unless the error is embraced with understanding and pertinacy. Hall may have finished the quotation early because he knows that the portion he includes does indeed represent Field's overall position, and he avoids dealing with an unnecessary complication. Field's reference to those who die after baptism shouldn't be taken to imply that survival entailed necessary damnation. Milton's conclusion is apposite: 'Whatever Rome did thereafter was bound to impede [but not necessarily disallow] any hope of salvation'.<sup>57</sup>

Milton quotes Field on the distinction between the church visible and invisible in chapters 3 and 6. Field would not have agreed with Laud's later insistence, quoted by Milton, that the church invisible is contained in the church visible,<sup>58</sup> given Field allows several reasons why an elect individual might be outside the church visible, especially by reason of unjust excommunication, or of displaced sects, or otherwise suffering tyranny from within the mainstream church visible. After all, is not even Field's arch-antagonist, Cardinal Bellarmine, renowned to have been appealing fully and only to God's mercy on his deathbed? Field, were he to have known this, would have certainly made the charitable assumption. 'Nevertheless, it was the church of the elect which continued to be the principal concern of these divines',<sup>59</sup> avers Milton – some of those divines, even many of them, maybe; but not Field. Field's overriding preoccupation is with the church visible, and its identity on earth (generally) and within England (in particular). Milton avers that '[t]he "*Holy Catholic Church*", it was generally agreed, denoted the church of the elect', and he cites Davenant and Rainolds (but not Field) to that end.<sup>60</sup> It is unlikely Field would have agreed with this. For Field, the catholic church is holy by definition, for it is the creation of God, i.e. set apart by God's gracious call; the holy catholic church equals the catholic church on earth, and is not narrowed in scope by the word 'holy'.

We recall that for Field 'all they are of the Church that outwardly hold the faith of Christ; and that that society wherein the sincere outward profession of the truth of God is preserved, is [the] true Church of God'.<sup>61</sup> '[I]t is false', says Field, 'that Bellarmine affirmeth, that we [protestants] require inward qualities to make a man to be of the Church, thereby making it unknown who are that Church

<sup>57</sup> *Catholic and Reformed*, 136.

<sup>58</sup> Milton quotes the one place in all of Laud's writings where he refers to the invisible church of the elect, where he, Laud, states 'the invisible church is in the visible' (Laud, *Works*, II, 155, note n), cited by Milton in *Catholic and Reformed*, 159.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>60</sup> Milton, *Catholic and Reformed*, 150.

<sup>61</sup> (1.11/1.38)

[...]. For we do not require inward qualities in a man, before he can be at all of the Church; but before he can be fully, and of the mystical body of Christ [...] that more special number of the elect of God [...]; which who they are is known to none, but God only'.<sup>62</sup> But this is all Field concludes about the church invisible, save only the observation that 'the promises of everlasting love and mercy [...] pertain only to the more special number of the elect of God'.<sup>63</sup> It is the church visible Field is concerned with, which comprises those who 'all concur in the same holy profession', and who thus 'make one holy Catholic Church'.<sup>64</sup> The Holy Catholic Church, for Field, is not the elect; it is the church visible, even though it contains those who hold not a 'saving profession', but an 'outward profession'<sup>65</sup> only. I have to wonder, therefore, exactly what Milton means in ascribing to Field 'a formal orthodox definition of the church in terms of the elect'.<sup>66</sup> For Field, the orthodox church is that church wherein orthodox doctrine is formally held (thus the Church of England in Field's time, and the Church of Rome 'when Luther began', for in Field's view the damnably heretical doctrines of Rome were the profession of the papal faction only, 'being a dangerous faction in the midst of her, seeking her destruction',<sup>67</sup> and were not the official doctrines of Rome. For 'the errors that we condemn were taught in the Roman Church that was when Luther began, but they were not the doctrines of that Church'.<sup>68</sup> I would raise a question mark over Milton's suggestion of 'blurring of language and distinctions'<sup>69</sup> in Field's thought, for it is my belief that Field is always crystal clear in his distinctions and categories, howsoever he makes his distinctions by means of very careful and lengthy explanation that at times reaches extremes of pedantry. Dawn agrees with my reservation: Milton argues, Dawn observes, 'that Field's approach relied upon a "blurring of language and definitions", and that incoherence in the usage of the term "church" made Field's approach possible. [...] [but Field] did not, as Milton asserts, rely on incoherence in order to accomplish his polemical ends. He relied instead on doctrine'.<sup>70</sup> Dawn in fact strengthens this doubt about Milton's position: 'Despite his [Milton's] generally excellent work on Field, these assertions [about blurring of language, and incoherence] now stand in grave doubt'.<sup>71</sup> But even Dawn considers that Field's 'use of the term "church" was less than clear',<sup>72</sup> with which sentiment I disagree – Field is always crystal clear, so long as one reads carefully a sufficiently large section of Field's text to establish adequate

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<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>63</sup> (1.11/l.38-39)

<sup>64</sup> (1.11/l.39)

<sup>65</sup> See an instance of this common expression as used by Field in e.g. (1.11/l.38)

<sup>66</sup> Milton, *Catholic and Reformed*, 159.

<sup>67</sup> (5App.pt3/iv.524)

<sup>68</sup> (5App.pt3/iv.525)

<sup>69</sup> *Catholic and Reformed*, 293.

<sup>70</sup> Russell Dawn, *Predestination and the Lord's Supper in the Polemical Ecclesiology of Richard Field* (Oxford University PhD Thesis), 15,19.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 164.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, 19.

context and encompass the entire argument in question. We need to be clear with Field's clarity that for him the visible Church of Rome in Luther's time consisted of 'two sorts of men': first, those 'holding a saving profession of the truth in Christ', i.e., the church's 'best and principal parts' (the elect, although these are not definitively circumscribable on earth); secondly, the 'dangerous faction', 'professing Christ, and baptised', albeit they only hold 'the profession of *some parts* of heavenly truth'.<sup>73</sup>

Milton's chapter 6, surveys early-modern protestant opinion on the matter of succession of the apostolic faith, especially in relation to the church before Luther. He demonstrates Field's insistence, a novelty at the time, that the pre-Tridentine Church of Rome was essentially a protestant church, as we have shown above,<sup>74</sup> and shows very pertinently how Field was in the vanguard of this move, to be followed subsequently by many Jacobean divines;<sup>75</sup> but that the Tridentine Church of Rome is not in any way a true church. Field does not follow typical protestant divines of the Elizabethan era, Milton observes, in trying to find the origin of the church in England, not in the Augustinian mission, but prior to it. Thus Field has no compunctions in holding the Latin church to be the Church of England's 'mother church'.<sup>76</sup> It should be noted, though, that this does not apply to the then current Tridentine Church of Rome. Rather, the historic Latin church is 'mother' of the western churches for the simple reason that they 'received their Christianity and faith from her'.<sup>77</sup> Indeed, we should not forget also that for Field the Church of England is the legitimate true church continuation of the historic Latin church in England, and that it is the current Tridentine Roman Church that has seceded schismatically from the apostolic succession, and thus can in no way be considered 'mother' now. Mother is to be seen in terms of apostolic succession, not higher authority. So Milton's statement that 'Field admitted that Rome was the "mother church"' <sup>78</sup> does carry the possibility of misconstruction; 'Rome' here is the historic Latin church, not the then present-day Church of Rome. Still in chapter 6, Milton states his view that in Field's writings 'it is sometimes very difficult to know exactly to which pre-Reformation "Church" they are referring – whether to the elect, or a saving remnant of true believers, or the general Christian community'.<sup>79</sup> I wouldn't want to dispute that Field's extended argumentation can involve bewildering, sometimes exasperating, intricacies, such that selecting a portion of an argument, then taken out of its wider context, can leave one wondering exactly how certain terms are used. However, I would suggest a modification to Milton's statement:

<sup>73</sup> (5App.pt3/iv.524-5), emphasis mine.

<sup>74</sup> Chapters 6, 7.

<sup>75</sup> *Catholic and Reformed*, 278, 286.

<sup>76</sup> See, e.g., (5App.Pt3/iv.556)

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>78</sup> *Catholic and Reformed*, 276.

<sup>79</sup> *Catholic and Reformed*, 294.

if one dips into Field briefly, then yes, establishing exactly what he means by 'the church' at that point can be uncertain. But in my experience of reading Field, this resolves with the wider context in view – but this often entails reading and following the whole of a long argument, and the wider context can involve reading a large swathe of text.

Milton's chapter 8 notes more briefly Field's insistence that the churches of the East, despite holding many (non-fundamental) errors, were orthodox in faith and not to be damned as Rome had done, as well as Field's opinion of the compatibility of Calvinist and Lutheran doctrine. Likewise chapter 9 details Field's view of bishops and presbyters being not separate orders of ministry, and of the validity of the Church of England's bishops. Milton's command of Field and hosts of others of his time is impressive, and he is certainly one exception (along with Avis) to the general omission of discussion of Field in modern scholarship. In the paragraphs above I have taken a large but representative sample of Milton's uses of Field, showing how he impressively portrays in summary some of the salient features of Field's (and many others') thought. Nonetheless, Milton does not claim to analyse Field comprehensively. His use of Field is necessarily episodic, and he quotes Field piecemeal. This is not to criticise Milton. His aim is to analyse the development of a protestant consensus (or lack of one) over the early-modern period, employing Field and many other divines of the period towards this end. He does not seek to make any of his quoted divines the object of a comprehensive analysis. My conclusion is that Milton has done what few others have done – he has given Field a prominent exposure by a myriad of quotations from *Of the Church* unlike the ones, twos and threes of other writers; but, I aver, we still need Field brought to the fore by concentrated treatments of Field as a whole, not Field in sections. Avis began to redress this hitherto lack in his several page treatment of Field. Jones-Davies analysed a sermon, but not Field the scholar generally. Dawn has written a thesis-length treatment of two particular but related doctrines (see below). This current study is a humble attempt to continue to raise Field's profile in our day.

### 11.3 Russell Dawn

Russell Dawn's doctoral thesis is an impressive and very detailed analysis principally of Field's view of two specific Christian doctrines, namely 'Predestination and the Lord's Supper'.<sup>80</sup> I have interacted with Dawn a number of times in this study at points above where certain of his insights are relevant to my objective. My remit in this study is not to address specific Christian doctrines within their own narrow confines, save only for Field's doctrine of the church; my own objective is to focus upon the umbrella issue of Field's ecclesiology and his polemical dispute with the ecclesiology of Rome.

<sup>80</sup> Russell P. Dawn, *Predestination and the Lord's Supper in the Polemical Ecclesiology of Richard Field (1561-1616)* (Oxford University PhD thesis, 2011).

Because of the very different scopes of our two studies, it is not my intention, nor is there any pertinent need, for me to interact further with Dawn. Nonetheless, it would be in order for me here to give a brief survey of Dawn's thesis, which sadly is only available for consultation in its print form, and that only in Oxford's Bodleian Library.

After a brief introduction to Field, the person and scholar, Dawn gives an account of the historiography of the doctrine of 'predestination in late Elizabethan and early Jacobean England'.<sup>81</sup> Dawn shows how a view of puritanism as being the dominant paradigm 'on the rise in the 1620s'<sup>82</sup> was challenged by Nicholas Tyacke's revisionist view, that it was, rather, Arminianism in his 1973 seminal 'Puritanism, Arminianism and Counter-Revolution'.<sup>83</sup> Following the revisionist ascendancy was 'the emergence of post-revisionism' (as Dawn terms it) in the works of, especially, Peter Lake, Anthony Milton, and Kenneth Fincham, and following that, Peter White, and others, have revived the view that the rising conflict leading up to the civil war was 'between Anglicans and puritans, even if by other names'.<sup>84</sup> Dawn considers all these various views, given that the question of how predestination was understood by the various factions (Arminian, puritan Calvinist, conformist Calvinist; reformed infralapsarian, reformed supralapsarian) was a vital, even predominant, issue in the debate.

The following chapter of Dawn's thesis analyses Field's view on predestination, engaging with the five modern scholars, Tyacke, Lake, Milton, Fincham, White, with their varying analyses; and comparing Field on predestination against Field's contemporaries or near-contemporaries, William Perkins, Richard Hooker and Lancelot Andrewes. In respect of the five modern scholars, Dawn notes the relative paucity of their references to Field (as is the case with other modern scholars likewise), Milton excepted. Nonetheless, Dawn analyses their respective and often differing perspectives on how predestination was conceived or moderated in the Elizabethan through to Caroline eras, and against the backdrop of his conclusions he proceeds to consider where Field stands in relation to the wide spectrum of those different views. This he does in the ensuing chapters, analysing Field's *Of the Church* and his one surviving manuscript lecture on predestination of the three he delivered *in vesperis* towards his DD degree,<sup>85</sup> and demonstrating how he compares or contrasts against Perkins, Hooker and Andrewes. Dawn covers the Lambeth Articles, the doctrines of unconditional election,

<sup>81</sup> Russell Dawn, *Predestination and the Lord's Supper*, 28-34.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, 29.

<sup>83</sup> Nicholas Tyacke, 'Puritanism, Arminianism and Counter-Revolution', in Conrad Russell (ed.), *The Origins of the English Civil War* (London: Macmillan, 1973), 119-43.

<sup>84</sup> Dawn, *Predestination*, 33.

<sup>85</sup> Richard Field, *Doctrina praedestinationis olim tradita ab Augustino et nostris temporibus a Calvino eadem est nec quicquam continet catholicae veritati aut fidei regulae contrarium* (Oxford Bodleian Library, MS Rawlinson d. 399). See Andrew Clark, *Register of the University of Oxford*, II pt 1, 199. Field delivered these lectures in 1597, oddly but not exceptionally the year following his being licensed DD at Queen's College Oxford.

double (or otherwise) predestination, reprobation, perseverance of the saints, assurance of salvation, free will and universal grace, the divine decrees, the extent of the atonement and of grace. Dawn's conclusion is that Field was a moderate Calvinist; or more particularly 'a strict Calvinist [. . .] tempered by his infralapsarianism',<sup>86</sup> who believed in perseverance, experimental assurance and limited atonement, and who downplayed reprobation, but who held a somewhat idiosyncratic particularist view of the atonement whereby (contra Perkins) everyone in the church visible receives grace *sufficient* to salvation, but only the elect receive grace practically *efficacious* for salvation. In this respect Field 'occupied a distinctive position on the doctrine of grace vis-à-vis English churchmen of his era'.<sup>87</sup> By way of contrast, Dawn finds Hooker to be an 'anti-Calvinist [single predestinarian], and Andrewes [. . .] an anti-Calvinist bordering on Arminianism'.<sup>88</sup> As to where Field stands on a spectrum, 'Field's Calvinism may be thought of as "softer" than that of Perkins [. . .], bringing Field closer to Hooker and Andrewes (although still quite distant from Andrewes)'.<sup>89</sup> Diagrammatically, the spectrum might look thus: Reformed (e.g. Perkins) > Field > Hooker > Andrewes > Arminian (e.g. Laud).

Following Dawn's analysis of Field on predestination, he devotes two chapters to analysing and assessing Field on Christ's humanity, his ubiquitous presence and Field's consequent eucharistic thought. Dawn advances his belief that Field, 'understood the Lutheran doctrine of ubiquity',<sup>90</sup> 'displaying a comprehension of the doctrine that was rare among English divines of his era',<sup>91</sup> and 'articulated his own coherent version of it',<sup>92</sup> with a view to advancing his belief that Lutheranism and Calvinism were entirely compatible and not in contradiction (though in tension) in respect of eucharistic doctrine and the real presence. Dawn quotes Field regarding the Lutheran and Reformed views of the Eucharist: 'there is no difference between these men, touching the presence of Christ's body in the sacrament'.<sup>93</sup> Here is Field advancing his view that the Lutheran and Reformed positions can be reconciled if only clear understanding were to be brought to the conflict.

One further thing needs to be observed about Dawn's work. Towards the beginning of his thesis Dawn has assessed the historiography of the theological movements of the Elizabethan and Jacobean eras, through to the Restoration. He notes how the issues of 'conformism' *versus*

<sup>86</sup> Dawn, *Predestination and the Lord's Supper*, 159.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid*, 158.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid*, 66.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid*, 158.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid*, 199.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid*, 201.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid*, 199.

<sup>93</sup> (5App.Pt1/iv.409)



'puritanism', and 'Calvinism' *versus* 'anti-Calvinism' (sometimes over the past few decades referred to as 'Arminianism', but not with a settled consensus as to the better term), have dominated the debates. Likewise, one particular doctrine, namely predestination, has been to the fore throughout the modern debates, because it is a direct consequence of Calvinistic disputes. Predestination is one of the principal concerns of Dawn's thesis. Dawn's analysis of this historiography is penetrating. The relevance of this to the current study is that ecclesiology as such has *not* been a prime concern in recent debates, not, at least, concerning the definition of the church, its constitution and its marks. Perhaps, given Field's interest in the latter aspects of ecclesiology, and given he writes in relation to Rome and not to the Calvinism debates, this is why Field has been neglected, because hitherto only an occasional writer has seen the value of Field's contribution to scholarship in recent decades. Dawn has shown that Field can indeed be mined for very distinctive doctrinal stances which actually do impact upon the debates of recent interest. But this also explains why this current study only marginally intersects with Dawn's; the interest of this study is precisely the systematic ecclesiology that was Field's interest, but which has not been a dominant interest of modern scholarship, save in the work of Avis and to some extent in Milton.

This is only an extremely brief summary of Dawn's work, and I refer the interested reader to the thesis in the Bodleian Library. Dawn has done scholarship an enormous service in this meticulous and thoroughly impressive assessment of these particular doctrines as held by Field. Dawn's thesis contrasts markedly with this current study. I give a broad-sweep overview of Field's ecclesiology, recognising *Of the Church* as being a unique (or at least the first) concerted systematic ecclesiology as such, in the vanguard of ideas such as Field's belief in the essential protestantism of the medieval Latin church; Dawn by contrast offers an thoroughgoing and extremely in-depth study of some very specific doctrines, penetrating deeply rather than ranging wide. This current modest study pales before the erudition of Dawn's contribution to modern scholarship.

#### 11.4 Tyacke, Lake, Fincham, White

This study has not engaged more than occasionally with other modern scholars of the Jacobean era. This is not on account of negligence or denial of their worth – far from it. Nicholas Tyacke, Peter Lake, Kenneth Fincham and Peter White, as Anthony Milton likewise, together also with Charles Prior, Patrick Collinson, Alec Ryrie and a number of others, are highly respected scholars whose writings represent a formidable analysis of the age. Because of their special interest in the Calvinism-Arminianism disputes both in England and on the continent as those disputes developed in the late

Elizabethan and Jacobean eras and beyond, they have been prime sources for Russell Dawn in his analysis of predestination in Field's era and beyond.

With the exception of Milton whom I engaged with above, none of them pay extended attention to Field, however, although they are all aware of him. This is not to imply a criticism in any way. They are treating trajectories of thought, not individual scholars. True, they all, of course, quote a whole plethora of early modern writers, but without in most cases giving special treatment to any individual. In the case of Field, their references to him are surprisingly sparse. Thus, for example, Fincham has one reference to Field in *Hazards of the Jacobean Court*, referring briefly to King James's promise of the bishopric of Oxford on reversion,<sup>94</sup> and one in his *Prelate as Pastor*, where he affirms James's general positive attitude to Field, but also the one contrary incident.<sup>95</sup> Tyacke, in his seminal *Anti-Calvinists*, refers to Field just twice, once briefly concerning the enigma of his attendance at Hampton Court, and once briefly noting Field's lecture on predestination when incepting for DD.<sup>96</sup> Tyacke also has a single reference to Field in his *Aspects of English Protestantism*,<sup>97</sup> in which he notes Field's offense taken at Robert Abbot's Oxford Act lecture. Peter White has a single reference to Field in his chapter 'The Via Media' in *The Early Stuart Church*, in which he too notes Field's offense taken, and concludes Field cannot be easily placed into either of the 'two sides' in the debate.<sup>98</sup> White also has a discussion about Field's view of the origin of sin in his *Predestination, Policy and Polemic*.<sup>99</sup> Charles Prior has three brief references to Field, with minimal discussion, in his *Defining the Jacobean Church*.<sup>100</sup> Alec Ryrie quotes Field once in his *Protestants*, observing of him that 'Field tried to explain the doctrinal differences [between Luther and Calvin] away altogether'.<sup>101</sup> A generation earlier, Norman Sykes noted Field on the subject of bishops in his *Old Priest, New Presbyterian*, in which he described Field as being 'peculiar in denying that the episcopate was a separate order'.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>94</sup> Fincham, 'Hazards', 570.

<sup>95</sup> Fincham, *Prelate*, 24.

<sup>96</sup> Tyacke, *Anti-Calvinists*, 11-14; 60-61.

<sup>97</sup> Tyacke, *Aspects of English Protestantism, c.1530-1700*, 270.

<sup>98</sup> White, 'The Via Media', in *The Early Stuart Church*, ed. by Kenneth Fincham, 217.

<sup>99</sup> White, *Predestination, Policy and Polemic*, 155-159.

<sup>100</sup> Prior, *Defining the Jacobean Church*, 3, 50, 259.

<sup>101</sup> Ryrie, *Protestants*, 75.

<sup>102</sup> Sykes, *Old Priest, New Presbyterian*, 67, 73.

## Chapter 12

### – Conclusion –

#### 12 Conclusion

Until this century Richard Field, DD, 1561-1616, has not had extensive treatment at the hand of scholars. True, he has been known in the scholarly community for four centuries. And since the nineteenth century, during which the poet (but not theologian) Coleridge, and the churchman Newman, were enthusiastic devotees, Field has been dipped into by numerous scholars, mining him piecemeal for contributions to various aspects of ecclesiology and Christian doctrine – and this not without profit, of course, although individual brief quotations from this major scholar cannot in isolation or even in aggregation be deemed to constitute a presentation of this divine's contribution to posterity. In the twentieth century Jones-Davies, concerning the *Sermon*, and Avis, providing an overview of his ecclesiology, each devoted several pages to Field. But in analysing their contributions I have observed how vital it is that the modern scholar reads Field carefully. Only in these early years of the twenty-first century have two major studies been undertaken, Dawn's and this current one. Dawn's doctoral thesis is a highly specialised one, analysing Field's doctrines of predestination and the Lord's supper. Mine is very different, seeking to present Field as a formidable scholar with identifiable personal characteristics, known and admired in his time; and as a pedantically precise theologian who provided posterity with arguably the most comprehensive and meticulously structured systematic ecclesiology of the early modern era.

Field as a person was clearly liked and admired by many. But it is worth reflecting upon who these admirers were. Almost exclusively they were family and scholars, albeit in the latter case sometimes amateur ones, and some local notables and churchmen. We recall how Field himself rejoiced when new canons of Windsor were of erudite reputation. King James, no mean scholar himself, admired Field, notwithstanding the one possible negative reaction examined above. But there is very little evidence, if any at all, that Field was known and admired at court. True, he preached before the king, often we are told, although there is only the one published sermon. And we know that Field and James discussed divinity together – but this may have been restricted to the mealtimes when James, eating alone, routinely had a divine for company, standing, not eating, to the king's rear. We get a picture of the man, then, as being fascinating company, but only for a narrow spectrum of associates.

Field could clearly gain an admiring audience, hanging upon his every word – as long as that audience loved hearing an erudite theologian discoursing avidly. As to whether he was ‘good company’ in other contexts, that must remain unproven, saving only for his first wife Elizabeth and son Nathaniel who clearly loved him.

I have briefly compared Field with Hooker, but not extensively, because of their different purposes in writing. That the two were friends has been stated (by Nathaniel), but remains unproved and not necessarily likely. I have noted that Hooker’s debate with Travers largely drove his purpose, and catapulted him to a notoriety that he did not relish. Field never had that public acclaim. Also, he did not have a patron such as Hooker did in Whitgift who specifically encouraged Hooker to produce his *Lawes*; there is one indication in Field’s dedication that perhaps it was Bancroft who initially made the suggestion that Field should write, or gave encouragement to that end – but this did not originate from the same public reputations as Hooker had not enjoyed. No-one edited Field as Spenser edited Hooker. Hooker was published and republished many times, continuing to this day. Field not so, save only by his son, until the nineteenth century. Like Hooker, there is no indication that Field courted public acclaim, and perhaps he studiously avoided it – that he only ever published one sermon, in contrast to the many of others, might indicate this. Overall, I suggest that we have in Field a scholar who is indeed a prodigy, but a substantially shy one, save only in arenas where he ‘feels safe’ – namely his family, and the world of erudite scholarship sympathetic to his cause.

Consider, now, his highly precise, pedantic, perfectionist and tightly structured analytical method. This is formidable, as we have seen. As is his ability to hold unswervingly and single-mindedly to his cherished causes, arguing in minute detail to establish the rightness of his conclusions. Ever working from first principles, and entering every avenue possible in order to perfect his argument, he writes voluminous text without ever wasting a word. And he is supremely confident in his own conclusions, and dismissive of his opponents’ arguments and intelligence. It would not be out of order to wonder if our man was (borderline) high-functioning autistic, a few centuries before such a characteristic was denominated. Field consequently sees the theological world in blacks and whites. The two manifestations of Christianity that do not fit his scheme, namely presbyterianism and Romanism, he damns (employing that term or its cognates in both cases). In the case of presbyterianism, he does so minimally, as it is not his target in *Of the Church* (but was so in his discoursing in his early years at Oxford). In the case of Romanism, as we have seen, he systematically damns it (and its spokesmen) with nearly three quarters of a million words. But where these two moieties are ‘black’, every other is ‘white’.

Field's capacity to embrace every other church in Christendom as valid expressions of his ecclesiological system is so dominant in the force of his argument against Rome that it must be considered one of the two prime distinctives of his work – the other being his finding every protestant doctrine manifested in the Church of Rome, from the pen of one or other church father or theologian in every generation, continuously without break. No other early modern protestant writer that I can find matches Field's determination to demonstrate these two major components of his ecclesiology. Putting the two together, we can summarise Field's ecclesiology thus: the historic Church of Rome, with the papal faction hypothetically subtracted from it, was always the protestant church of the West; and within England it is the Church of England, and not the Tridentine Church of Rome, that is and should be considered its rightful continuation. I have argued that the ecclesiological works of other divines such as Jewel, and especially the towering Hooker, do not supplant the need for Field to be in the scholarly domain, however important their works were in their time, and were afterwards in Field's time (being each republished at least twice in James I's reign); those writers, and others, had different immediate aetiologies and purposes, resulting in their equally important works being of a substantially different nature to Field's. For all these reasons I suggest Field is worthy of being remembered; and his profile in the academic arena worthy of being raised more prominently than has been done so far, and profitably, by Milton, Dawn and a few others; and his name worthy of being better known than is currently the case; and thus worthy of continued scholarship in our day.

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## Abbreviations

### Note:

- A reference in this study such as (3.8/1.171) means Book 3 (of Field's 'Five Books'), chapter 8, found in Volume 1, page 171, of the 1847-52 Ecclesiastical History Society edition of Field's work, *Of the Church*.
- Quotations from Field are verbatim from the EHS edition of Field. This modernises spellings and regularises some punctuation, but otherwise is faithful to the original editions.
- Some formatting within quotations is mine, including bulleting or numbering, indenting and other forms of layout (except for italicised Latin, which is original), and is added for clarity.

App	Appendix (3App: appendix to Field's Book 3; 5App: appendices after Field's Book 5)
<i>Athenae</i>	Wood's <i>Athenae Oxonienses</i>
<i>Bliss</i>	The Bliss (ed.) edition of Anthony Wood's <i>Athenae</i>
BN	Biographical Notice ( <i>Of the Church</i> , EHS edn, vol. 1, iii-xiii)
Book 1, etc.	These are always the books of Field's <i>Of the Church</i> , unless otherwise denominated
<i>DNB</i>	Dictionary of National Biography
ED	Epistle Dedicatory
ed.	Editor or edited
eds	Editors
edn	Edition
EEBO	Early English Books Online
EHS	Ecclesiastical History Society
ER	Epistle to the Reader
Field	If otherwise unqualified, this is always Richard Field, DD; any other person of the name Field is always clearly denominated
<i>Foster</i>	Foster's <i>Alumni Oxonienses, 1500-1714</i> , Early Series, vol. II
FRS	Fellow of the Royal Society
FSA	Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries
G14467	A unique copy of <i>Memorials</i> held at British Library, shelf mark G14467
HALS	Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies
<i>Institutes</i>	Calvin's <i>Institutes of the Christian Religion</i>
I, IV, etc.	Roman numerals in small 'ALL CAPS' are always volume numbers
KJV	King James Version of the Bible
<i>Lawes</i>	Hooker's <i>Lawes of Ecclesiastical Polity</i>
<i>Memorials</i>	Nathaniel Field's biography of Field, <i>Some Short Memorials</i>
NT	New Testament
<i>ODNB</i>	Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, 2004
OT	Old Testament
PRO	Public Record Office, the former name of TNA
<i>Sermon</i>	Field's published sermon, <i>A Learned Sermon</i>
SP	State Papers
STC	Short Title Catalogue
TCP	Text Creation Partnership
TNA	The National Archives at Kew, UK
<i>Venn</i>	Venn's <i>Alumni Cantabrigienses</i> , Part I, vol. II
<i>Works</i>	Keble's 1888 7 <sup>th</sup> edition of Hooker's works

## Note on dating terminology

### The new and old dating conventions for the beginning of the year

Calendar years are virtually always given in this study according to the new convention, where the year is taken as starting on 1 January. The old convention, dating from the twelfth century and lasting through into the eighteenth century in England, counted the beginning of the year as being 25 March. The new convention began to come into play gradually, but by no means consistently, in the late sixteenth century. Thus a date such as '11 March 1611', when quoted from a contemporary source without sufficient context, might mean 11 March 1611 or 11 March 1612 in the new convention. To resolve the uncertainty in a few instances I might quote the date using this device: '11 March 1611 (i.e. 1612)'. I employ this device whenever I consider it helpful to dispel any possible confusion as to which convention is intended. Unlike some, I do not employ the terms *New Style* (NS) or *Old Style* (OS) in this regard, owing to disagreement as to what these terms mean.

Where I do not resort to the above device, and give a mere year such as 1609, it will always reflect the new convention. The major exception concerns years which represent the publication years of printed works, where certainty in this regard is not possible. Such a year is always recorded in this study exactly as it was on the publication's title page, regardless of which dating convention was used – it is often impossible to determine which, especially where the month and day are not specified. A publication year of 1609 might well be 1609 in one or other convention, but it could conceivably be 1610 in the new convention, or 1608 in the old.

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## Appendix

### The text of Field's Learned Sermon preached before the king, 16 March 1604

Edited by Vernon Wilkins

#### Editorial note:

This is the original printed version of 1604 – exact letter-by-letter transcription by Text Creation Partnership (copyright unrestricted), but modified as follows:

Certain uncertainties in the TCP transcription are resolved here by reference to the original, together with the following errors in the TCP version corrected thus: the word rendered *Arimmum* by TCP at Sig.B8 should read *Ariminum* (i.e., Italian Rimini), and is corrected thus below; likewise the word 'renowned' at Sig.A7 rendered 'renowmed' by TCP is corrected.

One word 'time', mistakenly repeated in the original at Sig.C3, is removed below. Likewise 'pulchritudimis' in the original at Sig.C6 is corrected to 'pulchritudinis'.

In addition, instances of 'vv' have been rendered 'w' where appropriate below; 'u' and 'v' in the original, where we would use the other, have been interchanged where appropriate, regularising them to modern usage; and likewise 'i' and 'j'. Otherwise, all spellings variant from modern usage have been left unaltered, however infuriating to the modern reader.

Insertions <thus>, such as <A4v>, mark new page signatures in the 1604 publication. Insertions of numbering [thus], such as [1.2] or [a] or [ii] are my suggested structure markers.

All footnotes are mine, for explication.

Occurrences within the text of {*Note: ...*} are the marginal notes in the original, transcribed exactly, and inserted here at the relevant places to which they refer.

Other text in square brackets [thus] is either an editorial explication, or some other similar editorial adjustment; or, in three cases, the originally omitted Latin translation supplied here (imperfectly) by the editor, marked by a double square bracket [[thus]].

<Sigs A1,1v> [blank]

<Sig. A2> **A Learned Sermon preached before the King at Whitehall,  
on Friday the 16 of March:<sup>1</sup> by M. Doctor *Field*: Chaplaine to his Maiestie.**

**At London, Printed by James Roberts, for Jeffry Chorlton. 1604. 8<sup>o</sup>**

<A2v> [blank]

[Text:]

<A3> *Jude. verse. 3.*

*Beloved, when I gave all diligence, to write unto you of the common salvation,  
it was necessarie for me to write unto you, to exhort you,  
that you should earnestly contend for the maintenance of<sup>2</sup> the Faith,  
which was once delivered unto the Saints.*

THE blessed Apostle Saint *Jude*, finding that many in his time began well, and ended ill, who beeing seduced by wicked miscreants made shipwracke of the fayth,<sup>3</sup> forsooke their first love,<sup>4</sup> departed away from the living GOD,<sup>5</sup> and embraced this present world: writeth this his Epistle generall to the Christians of those times, to strengthen the weake, confirme the doubtfull, and stay such as were ready to fall.

The argument whereof is contained in these words, which I have now read in <A3v> your hearing: wherein three thinges are to be observed. First, [1] he maketh knowne unto them his love: in that he calleth them his *beloved*. Secondly, [2] his carefull and diligent study and endeavour, not onely by word being present, but also by writing beeing absent, to procure their everlasting good, and to direct them to the attayning of eternall salvation, in that he professeth, *he gave all diligence to write unto them of the common salvation*: Thirdlie [3] he sheweth, what it was, that in those his carefull deliberations (how he might most happily worke their eternall good) he found most necessary to write unto them of. *It was necessary for me to write unto you to exhort you to contende &c.* Of these thinges in order, as they lie in the words of the Apostle, & first of the first, which is his *love*.

<sup>1</sup> The year the sermon was preached is not given alongside the day and month on the original title page. In the old convention for beginning the year on 25 March, the year would be 1603; in the new convention, commencing the calendar year on 1 January, the year would be 1604. The sermon was published later in 1604, but we don't know when; it was not entered into the Stationer's Register.

<sup>2</sup> The words 'the maintenance of' do not appear in any of the English translations common today; particularly, they are not in the KJV in its various variants. Prior to the KJV of 1611 I can find these words in, but only in, the then popular Geneva Bible, whose text (following) differs from Field's in just two significant places (italicised): 'Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was *needful* for me to write unto you, to exhort you, that ye should earnestly contend for the maintenance of the faith, which was once *given* unto the Saints' (Jude 3, Geneva Bible). Of the English versions prior to KJV, only the Geneva Bible, the Rheims NT and the Bishops' Bible use the words 'contend for'; all previous ones use 'labour in' or (Wycliffe) 'strive for'. Field's 'necessary' and 'delivered' are unique to him and Rheims only at this stage. Pre-KJV, other versions have 'needful' and 'given' or (Wycliffe) 'taken'. That Field employs the Geneva translation is perhaps surprising, given it is not ecclesiastically authorised (albeit popular with the people), and Field is not known for his sympathy for the Geneva church polity.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Timothy 1:19.

<sup>4</sup> Revelation 2:4.

<sup>5</sup> Psalm 18:21.

**[1. The apostle Jude's love]**

[1] [1.1] Many and great are the things Almighty God requireth of them, whom he appointeth Rulers and Governours over his people. For as he communicateth unto them part of his owne honour, giveth them his owne tytles, setteth them upon his owne seate, committeth <A4>the care of his people unto them, and trusteth them with the execution of his owne justice and judgement, so he requireth of them, and putteth in them a spirit of more, then ordinary wisdom, courage, and magnanimitie, fit to sustaine and beare the weight of so great a burthen. But above all he requireth of them a tender and loving affection towards his people, of whom they take the charge, that they seeke not their owne private pleasure, profit, or content, but the good of them over whom they are set.

[1.2] And as this is required generally of all Rulers, so most principally of them, to whom the Word of reconciliation, the dispensation of the Divine mysteries, and the power of the keyes of the kingdome of heaven is committed. This our Saviour shewed by his manner of proceeding, and the course he tooke, when having accomplished the worke of redemption, and being ready to returne back to him, that sent him, he resolved to send out his Apostles with most ample Commission for the gathe<A4v>ring of the Saints, the worke of the Ministerie, and the conversion of such, as he had bought & purchased with his most precious blood. For though he had made choyce of such men for that imployment, as had beene conversant with him in the dayes of his flesh, seene his miracles and workes of wonder, and heard the words of his heavenly wisdom, and were most fit to be witnesses of all the things he did and suffered, and to publish the joyfull tydings of salvation to the people of the world, yet would he give them no Commission, till he were assured of their love. And therefore, though he had promised to builde his Church on Peters fayth and ministerie,<sup>6</sup> {*Note: Math. 16.*} and to give unto him the keyes of the kingdome of Heaven, yet before he performed this promise, and said unto him, {*Note: John, 21.*} Feed my lambes, feede my sheepe,<sup>7</sup> he demaunded thrice of him concerning his love. Neither doth he aske him of his love towards them, he was to take charge of, but of his love towards himselfe, thereby the more to enforce it, and raise it to a higher degree, as if he had <A5>thus said: If I have deserved any thing of thee, if my death and bitter sufferings deserve thy love, if thou owest any thing unto me for the benefits of the heavenly calling, the knowledge of that truth, which flesh and blood could not reveale unto thee, and the dignitie of an Apostle, wherewith I have honoured thee, as (I say unto thee) thou owest more then thy selfe: turne the course of thy love upon the people of my purchase: for they are the inheritance my Father gave me, when I came into the worlde, the reward of my labours, the recompence of my travailes, and the price of my blood: for their sakes I left my throne in Heaven, put off my robe of Majestie, and put uppon me the habite of a servaunt, they are my Temple, in which I am worshipped, my Church, in the midst wherof my Name is called uppon, my spouse, whom my soule loveth, and my body, with out which I am not complete and full.

[1.3] An example of this love, which God requireth of us, himselfe gave us, when he loved us, and gave his Sonne for us,<sup>8</sup> <A5v>whiles we were yet his enemies.<sup>9</sup> An example hereof Christ shewed us, when he poured forth his soule in bitter passions, to redeeme his people from theyr sinnes. An imitation of these examples in the highest degree, that ever was founde amongst mortall men, we have in Moses, that desired to have his name blotted out of the booke of life, rather then GOD

<sup>6</sup> Allusion to Matthew 16:18.

<sup>7</sup> John 21:15-17.

<sup>8</sup> Alluding to John 3:16.

<sup>9</sup> Alluding to Romans 5:8-10.



should be dishonoured, or his people destroyed:<sup>10</sup> and in Paule, who wished to be Anathema from the Lord Jesus, for the Jewes his brethren and kinsmen according to the flesh.<sup>11</sup> A portion, degree, and measure of this love, resteth upon all the true servaunts of God, whence it commeth that so often, when they speake unto the people of God, they call them beloved. So much of the Apostles love. His diligence followeth.

## [2. The apostle Jude's diligence]

[2] *Diligence* or studie, is an intente fixing of the minde on some one thing much esteemed, and respected. The diligence of the Apostles, and Apostolike men in the worke of the Ministry, the gathering of the Saints, and procuring the everlasting good, and eternall salva<A6>tion of Gods people appeareth in three thinges; [2.1] the multiplicite of the thinges, they do for the working of this intended good: [2.2] the sedulitie in doing them: and [2.3] the divers manner of doing of them.

[2.1] Touching the first: [2.1.1] who can expresse the varietie of the things, they do for the good of them, whom GOD hath committed to theyr charge? They teach the ignorant, convince them that erre, seeke them that are lost, bring backe them that are out of the way, heale the sicke, binde up the broken harted, comfort the heavy, & such as are dejected with sorrow, they strengthen the weake, confirme the doubtful, stay them that are ready to fall, and raise up them that are fallen.

[2.1.2] This multiplicity of endeavours, to procure the good of Gods people, we shall find in the blessed Apostle Saint *Paule* more, then in all the rest: who though he were the last, and esteemed himselfe the least, and not woorthy to be named an Apostle; yet laboured he more, then all they, who sometimes disputeth, sometimes exhorteth, sometimes commaundeth, sometimes entreateth, sometimes <A6v>counseleth, sometimes threatneth, sometimes promiseth, sometimes terrifyeth, & sometimes comforteth; sometimes commeth in the Spirit of meeknes, & sometimes with a rodde in his hand, calleth backe some, as beeing out of the way, encourageth others, & maketh himselfe one of their companie, as beeing in a good way: some he calleth his joy, his crowne & glorie, and to some he objects folly & madnes; to some he giveth milk, to some strong meat: sometimes he proscibeth and banisheth from the Church, sometimes he confirmeth his love towards the same againe. These are the divers & different things the Apostles and Apostolike men doe for the good of Gods people.

[2.2] Now as theyr diligence appeareth in this varietie, and multiplicite of things they do, so likewise in theyr sedulitie in doing them, in that they doe them [2.2.1] in season, and [2.2.2] out of season; and in the different manner of doing them, in that they performe them [2.3.1] by word being present, and [2.3.2] by Letters being absent. The Apostle Saint *Jude*, desiring to benefite <A7>the whole Christian Church, (with all the parts whereof it was not possible for him to be present) sheweth his diligence in wryting: *It was necessarie for me to write unto you*. Where we are occasioned to speake first [2.3.2.1] of wryting in generall: and secondly [2.3.2.2] of sacred wryting, & and the object of it.

[2.3.2.1] Great and inestimable is the benefit of writing, for by it all the treasures of wisdom, pietie, vertue, and learning, that ever God poured forth upon the sonnes of men, are communicated to posterities. By it we may commune withall the Patriarches, Prophets, Apostles, Martyrs, Confessors, Fathers of the Church (the lights and wonders of the world) that ever were; and whensoever any doubt ariseth and troubleth our mindes, we may call a greater & more generall

<sup>10</sup> Exodus 32:31-33.

<sup>11</sup> Romans 9:3.

Councill, then either *Constantine*, *Theodosius*, or any of the Romane Emperours either did, or could doe.

The benefit of writing will appeare to be the greater, if we compare them, who (being renowned for wisdom and learning) never wrote any thing, (as *Pythagoras*, *Socrates* and others, of whom very few things remaine) with *Plato*, *Aristotle*, and the like, that committed the treasures of their learning, and wisdom to writing, who, being dead long since, yet live, and are the great Maisters of the world even unto this day. Hence it is that no treasure was anciently, nor is presently esteemed greater, then the holy library of the church; in which respect the *Romanistes* deserve exceeding ill, that did formerly, & doe presently adulterate the monuments of antiquitie, and leave nothing sincere, and uncorrupt, as their manifold forgeries in former times, their *Index expurgatorius*<sup>12</sup> and other like practises of these times make it too plaine.

[2.3.2.2] This beeing noted in generall touching the benefit of writing, let us come to the more especiall consideration of sacred writing and the object of it. [2.3.2.2.1] In the Apostles times men admired their writings, but despised their words, and personall presence, as not being accompanied with that greatnes, they looked for. His letters say they (speaking of the blessed *Apostle Saint Paule* that trumpet of the *Gospell*, and flood of Christian eloquence) are peremptory, and full of authoritie and power, but his wordes, and personall presence weake, vile, and contemptible.

But now contrariwise the *Romanistes* regarde not their writings, but magnifie their words, delivered by tradition, charging their writings with obscuritie, insufficiency, and imperfection, comparing them to a shipmans hose, a nose of wax, a Lesbian rule;<sup>13</sup> affirming that but fewe things were written, *non ut praeessent, sed ut subessent fidei nostrae*, not to commaund & over-rule our faith, but to be over-ruled by it; that the *Apostles* receaved a commandement to preach, but none to writ; that they meant not to compose a perfect worke, containing the rule of our faith, but wrote onely occasionally, as they were entreated, or as the particular necessities of the Churches did require.

This their censure of the divine Scriptures is [a] *injurious*, in that they thinke them to be so obscure, and the sence, and meaning of them so uncertaine, and doubtfull, that wicked men may wrest and abuse them, according to their owne pleasures, & no man be able to reprove and convince them by the evidence and force of the Scriptures themselves: [b] *Impious* in that they thinke they proceeded from the private motions of the *Apostles* and *Evangelists*, without the immediate and special instinct, motion, & commaund of the spirit of truth: [c] *Inconsiderate* in that they thinke the men of God entended not to compose a perfect work.

The absurditie of which conceipt will appeare, if they will but take a view of the bookes themselves, they have left unto us. For the writings of the *Evangelists* containe a perfect history of the things Christ did, and suffered from the time of his birth, till the time he was assumed into Heaven. The *Actes* of the *Apostles*, the comming of the holy Ghost, & the planting of the Churches after Christes ascension. The *Epistles*, the clearing of the questions, and doubts which troubled the Churches of those times. And the *Revelation*, a prophesie of the future state of things, to the end of the world.

<sup>12</sup> *Index expurgatorius* or *Index Librorum Prohibitorum* (= List of Proscribed Books) was a list of publications deemed heretical, or otherwise banned, by the Church of Rome.

<sup>13</sup> A *Lesbian rule* was an easily bendable, but not floppy, tradesman's rod or rule made of pliable lead from Lesbos (in contradistinction to a 'canon', which means a rigid, straight rule).

[2.3.2.2.2] <B1>The object of these sacred writings is *Salvation*. Three things are delivered unto us in the bookes of God, [i] the creation, [ii] the fall, & [iii] the restauration & salvation of man. Salvation is the preservation from those dangers & deliverance from those eternall evils we were subject unto by the fall. This is the greatest benefit that ever God bestowed on men, and the principall matter and object of the divine Scriptures. For we might with *Job* curse the day of our birth,<sup>14</sup> wish the knees had never receaved us, the armes never embraced us, nor the pappes given us suck, that the wombe had bin our grave, and that we had bin like the untimely fruite, that never sawe the Sunne; that the Mountaines would fall uppon us, the Rockes cleave in sunder, and the devouring Gulfes swallow us up; that we might cease to be, and bee as if we had never beene, if wee had no part in the *Salvation* mentioned in this place.

Behold sayth *Gregorie Nazianzen* (magnifying this benefit of salvation) in the creation God gave us the best things he had, when as yet we had nothing, but <B1v>in the restauration hee maketh an exchange with us, he taketh the worst we have, and giveth us the best he hath; he taketh our nature, and giveth us his grace, he taketh our sinne and giveth us his righteousness, he taketh our curse and giveth us his blessing, he taketh our misery and giveth us his happines, he taketh our death and giveth us his life, he humbleth himselfe and exalteth us.

[2.3.2.2.3] This *salvation* is sayd to bee *common*, [2.3.2.2.3.1] not as if all men of how vile condition and wicked conversation soever should be partakers of it. For the Apostle Saint Paule protesteth against this frensie, saying. *Knowe you not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdome of God?*<sup>15</sup> And againe, *bee not deceived, neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor wantons, nor covetous persons, nor extortioners shall inherit the Kingdome of God.*<sup>16</sup>

Touching this matter there were foure dangerous errors in the primitive, Church: the first [A] of *Origen* who thought that all (even the devils themselves) after certaine revolutions of times shall be saved: the second [B] of them, who not da<B2>ring to proceed so farre as *Origen* did, yet thought, that all men shall in the end be saved, as by fire. The third, [C] that not all men, but all Christian men, notwithstanding whatsoever wickednes, Schisme or Heresie shall in the end bee saved. The fourth, [D] that not all Christians, but all Catholique, Orthodoxe, and right beleiving Christians shall in the end bee saved, as by fire, holding the foundation of a right profession. This last error many of the fathers fell into, as appeareth by very pregnant places in *Hierome*,<sup>17</sup> and others tending to that purpose, and by *Austines* owne confession, where hee writeth against it, calling it a mercifull error of some Catholique divine.

Against this error *Austine*<sup>18</sup> opposeth himselfe, {*Note: August: de civitat: dei de fid: et oper: In enchir: ad Laur:*}<sup>19</sup> but very fearfully; professing, that he will not peremptorie denie, but that a mitigation or suspension of the punishments of the wicked may be obtained after they are departed out of this world, so that their punishments bee confessed to be eternall. And if this will not satisfie them, from whom he is unwilling to dissent, he sayth that though <B2v>men professing the faith, being wholly wicked and voyde of love, cannot bee saved, as by fire, but must perish eternally, yet hee dareth not

<sup>14</sup> Alluding to Job 3:1-3.

<sup>15</sup> 1 Corinthians 6:9.

<sup>16</sup> 1 Corinthians 5:10 or 6:9.

<sup>17</sup> Jerome, c.347 - 420, early church Father and theologian, translated the Bible into the Latin 'Vulgate'.

<sup>18</sup> Augustine of Hippo, 354 - 430, early Christian church father and theologian; 'Doctor of Grace'.

<sup>19</sup> Field is referring here to Augustine's *The City of God* (written 413-426CE) and the chapter 'Faith and Works' in his *Enchiridion* (written after 420CE).

deny but that men, that doe beleive aright, and have love (though mingled with much imperfection) may bee saved by a kinde of purging fire after this life, which whether it be so, or not he cannot tell.

Thus wee see in what sort *Austine* was driven upon the opinion of purgatory, and how doubtfully he speaketh of it, yet was he the first that ever spake of this kinde of purgatorie in the Church of God. So doubtfull a beginning hath this article of the *Romanistes* faith, which yet rest not in the judgment of this father, that only some lighter sinnes are wasted, and consumed away in this purging fire, but imagine that the justice of God in it is satisfied, and the punishment of mortall sinnes suffered (the fault, and not the punishment being remitted in this life) which things *Austine* never dreamt of.

[2.3.2.2.3.2] But to returne to the wordes of the Apostle; *Salvation* is sayde to be *common* <B3>not absolute unto all, but unto them that are called, and sanctified of GOD, and reserved in Christ Jesus.

As in nature the best things, & things of necessitie, are eyther absolutely and equally, or at least in some mediocritie common unto all, but thinges of ornament & delight, are proper to some few: so is it in the matter of fayth, and salvation. Among the things of nature, what better, then ayre, fire, water, earth, showers of raine, the fruites of the fielde, houses to dwell in, garments to put on, health and strength of bodie, length of dayes, comely proportion, and stature of body, quicknes of sence, sharpnes of wit, and faithfulness of memory, the use and benefit of these is in some sort common unto all, and the poore man often enjoyeth them with more contentment, then the rich: neyther is there any man found to be so great a Tyrant, as to desire to enjoy these common benefits alone: but gold, pearles, precious stones, soft array, and thinges of that kinde, are the peculiar lot, & portion of some few. So likewise in the matter of fayth, and <B3v>grace, the Law, the Prophets, the covenants of Grace, the sufferings of Christ, regeneration, the Gospell, the giving of the Spirit, Faith, Hope, Love, and eternall Salvation are common unto all, that are called, and sanctified of GOD, not as *Manna* in a certaine measure, but every one taketh as much of them as he will: the gyfts of tongues, myracles, prophecie, the degrees of ministerie, & the like, are proper to some few.

When the Law was given uppon Mount *Sina*, *Moses*, & the Elders onely went up, the people (though prepared and sanctified to meete the Lorde) had boundes set unto them, and might not so much as touch the Mountaine:<sup>20</sup> *Moses* only entred into the clowde, communed with GOD, and received from him the tables of the Law; but when *Moses* came downe from God, the Law the Covenants, the Sacrifices, ceremonies, and all that *Moses* learned of God was imparted and communicated to all the people.<sup>21</sup>

### [3. The apostle Jude's exhortation]

[3] Thus much of the Apostles diligence in writing. The matter whereof he wri<B4>teth, followeth, It was **necessary**, for me to **writ** unto you to **exhort** you to **contend**. &c. In the matter, whereunto the Apostle exhorteth them, three things are to be observed. For first they must [a] **contend**, secondly they must [b] **contend earnestly**, thirdly they must [c] **contend for the maintenance of the faith**. It may seeme a thing very needles to exhort men to contend. For the world is and ever was to full of contentions. The contentions of Christians have scandalized many, they have beene the cause of the overthrow of many famous Churches; and the removing of those golden Candlestickes, in the midst whereof the Sonne of God sometime walked.<sup>22</sup> So that all good men dissuade from contentions, and

<sup>20</sup> Exodus 19:12ff.

<sup>21</sup> Exodus 24:3.

<sup>22</sup> Revelation 1:13, 2:1.

seeke to extinguish the flames of that fire, which hath alreadie wasted, and burnt downe so many, & so worthy parts of the house of God.

Austine understanding of the bitter invectives, {*Note: Epist. 15.*} that Hierome and Ruffinus had published one against another, breaketh forth into these words,<sup>23</sup> expressing the sorrow of his hart: *Hei mihi, qui vos <B4v>alicubi simul invenire non possum: fortē ut nunc moveor, ut doleo, ut timeo, prociderem ad pedes vestros, flerem quantum valerem, rogarem quantum amarem, nunc unumquenque vestrum pro seipso, nunc utrumque pro alterutro, et pro aliis, et maxime infirmis, pro quibus Christus mortuus est, qui vos tanquam in theatro huius vitae cum magno suo periculo spectant, ne de vobis ea scribendo spargatis, quae quandoque concordēs delere non poteritis.* Woe is me (saith he) that I can no where meet with you two together for if I could, as now I stand affected, as I sorrowe for these beginnings, and feare what will be the issues of things so ill begunne, I would fall at your feete and weepe till I had dried up the Fountaine of teares, I would entreate you so long, as the affection of love, that raineth in me, could suggest unto me one word of entreatie, now entreating and beseeching each of you for himselfe, now either of you for other, and for others, most of all the weake, for whom Christ dyed, which not without great perill behold you in these your contentions, brought upon the stage of this world to be gazed on, I would entreate you, not to publish those <B5>things in writing one of another, which hereafter when happily you may be friends, it will not be possible for you to blot out againe.

That we may therefore see, in what sence the Apostle exhorteth to contend, we must observe, that the thinges, for which men contend, are of three sorts; the first [3.1] are things indifferent. Such was the contention in the Primitive Church about fasting on the Saturday, in which observation the Church of Rome, and some other Western Churches, differed from the Churches of the East, which fasted not on that day. Some condemned the Church of Rome in this behalfe, but Austine thinketh the matter to be indifferent, and sheweth,<sup>24</sup> {*Note: Epistle to Cassulanus.*} that when his Mother Monica came to Milan (where Ambrose was Bishop) where the Saterdayes fast was not kept, and was doubtfull what to doe, Ambrose being consulted, aunswered, she should do as he did. She thinking she must not fast, because he did not, he replied, he meant not so: but that she should conforme her selfe to the manner of that Church, where she should happen to be, as he in such cases <B5v>used to do. And Austine addeth, that if in the same Churches there be different customes, men should follow the example of the principall Pastors.

This judgement we take to be much better, then that of the Fathers of the sixt Councell in Trullo,<sup>25</sup> who condemned the Church of Rome (as violating the Apostolike, and auncient custome) in that it fasted on the Saturday. Of this nature was the difference between the East, and West Churches, about consecrating in leavened, or unleavened bread, dipping, or sprinkling the baptized: thrice, or once; and such have been the contentions of some in our Church, about round and square, white & blacke, sitting, standing, and kneeling. In which thinges if any man list to be contentious, we say with the Apostle, We have no such custome, neither the Churches of God.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Epistle 15.

<sup>24</sup> Epistle to Cassulanus.

<sup>25</sup> This is the so-called Quinisext Council, or Penthekte Synod, of eastern bishops, held at Constantinople in 692, between the sixth and seventh ecumenical councils, aimed at settling disciplinary issues, its resolutions accepted by the East, rejected by the West. To describe the Quinisext Council as the 'sixth', then, is actually not correct. Trullo was not a town, but rather the domed hall of the emperor's palace.

<sup>26</sup> Quoting 1 Corinthians 11:16.

The second [3.2] kind of things, for which men contend, are things mistaken. An excellent example in this kinde we have in the Oration of Gregory Nazianzen, in the praise of Athanasius, where he reporteth, that when the Bishop of Rome <B6>and the Bishops of the West Church affirmed, that there is one essence of God, and three persons, and the Easterne Bishops, one essence, and three hypostases, or subsistences, the contention grew so hote that the whole Christian world was in danger, to be rent in peeces upon the difference of these syllables. Hierome living in the East parts, and being required to acknowledge three hypostases, or subsistences in God, writeth to Damasus, intreateth and beseecheth him, per crucifixam mundi salutem, per homousion trinitatem, ut sibi in Epistolis suis, sive tacendarum, sive dicendarum hypostaseon detur autoritas [[through the crucified saviour of the world, through the consubstantial trinity, that authority be given to him [Jerome] by letters whether to speak or to be silent [about the] hypostases]], and protesteth he greatly feareth, least sathan hath transfigured himselfe into an Angell of light. The Grecians judged the Latines, to be Sabellians, and the Latines the Greekes to be Arrians. Athanasius (that worthy of the world, in whose lappe our wearied Mother the Church did often repose, and lay her head, seeking rest from her forsaken children) in gentle and loving manner interposed himselfe, and examining eyther party, found they meant one & the same <B6v>thing. Thus was this division composed more easily by friendly mediation, then it would have beene by writing or disputing, which often rather increase contentions, then end them.

Of this nature doubtlesse are the differences betweene the Divines of Germany, Denmarke, Sweden, and other parts embracing the confession of Auspurge, and the Churches of Helvetia, Fraunce, and other, touching the ubiquitarie presence of Christ, and his presence in the Sacrament, touching the losing, or not losing of grace once had, and touching predestination; in all which I am verily perswaded, if the meaning of each part were fully knowne to other, there would be no difference amongst them.

For the divisions of our own Church, our hope is, that by the goodness of God, and the godly care of our gracious Sovereigne, they are now at an end: so that whosoever heereafter shall blow the coales, and kindle the fire of that dissention any more, he shall for ever be branded with the note and marke of a turbulent, unquiet, and factious spirit. Let not <B7>our adversaries therefore insult upon us in respect of our divisions. For I dare undertake to prove, there are more reall, & materiall differences amongst them in some one poynt of Christian religion, then amongst all the reformed Churches in all.

The [3.3] third sort of things for which men contend, are such as we ought to contend for; to wit, matters of fayth, no part whereof we must betray, how deere so ever the defence of it cost us. For these things we must contend [3.3.1] earnestly. Indifferencie in matters of fayth and religion displeaseth God. If God be God, let us follow him; if Baall be God let us follow him. There is no communion betweene light and darknes, righteousnes, and unrighteousnes, Christ and Beliall, the temple of God, & Idols, and what part hath the beleever with the infidell? But it will ever be true, which Christ observed in his time; the children of this world are wiser in theyr generation, then the children of light.<sup>27</sup> The Pharisees then, the Jesuits and others of that sort now, omit no opportunitie, take all occasions, & com<B7v>passe sea & land, to make one Proselyte, to make one of theyr profession, though they make him the childe of hell seaven-fold more, then themselves.<sup>28</sup> But the

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<sup>27</sup> Alluding to Luke 16:8.

<sup>28</sup> Alluding to Matthew 23:15.

Orthodoxe and right beleieving Christians are negligent,<sup>29</sup> and are so farre from gayning, that they lose the advantages they have.

It is observed, that in the time of the Arrian heresie, at the first the Catholiques<sup>30</sup> had all advantages on their side, the determination of the Nicen Councell called & confirmed by the royall authoritie of Constantine was for them, and Constantine resolute to suppress that heresie, and to send into banishment the maintainers of it. The Arrians seeing into what straites they were brought, rested not till they had insinuated themselves into Constantines favour, and perverted Constantius the next succeding Emperour, a man the Catholiques might easily have possessed. There were two thinges (as Nazianzen reporteth) that much disquieted and afflicted his minde at the time of his death, the one, that hee had followed new and strange opinions <B8>in matters of fayth, the other, that he should leave Julian a wicked miscreant to succede him in the Empire.

But what followed upon this carefull diligence of the one sort, and securitie & negligence of the other? by the meanes of Constantius the Arrians so prevailed, that in the Councels of Ariminum & Seleucia,<sup>31</sup> the synceritie of the Christian profession (agreed on in the Nicen Council) was betrayed, all the Bishoppes of the world, (Athanasius,<sup>32</sup> Eusebius,<sup>33</sup> Hilarius,<sup>34</sup> & some very few more, if yet there were any more, excepted) were drawne away and abused by the Arrians. Ingemuit totus orbis et miratus est, se factum esse Arrianum [“The whole world groaned, and was astonished to find itself Arian”].<sup>35</sup>

In our times, they of the Romish faction by fayre promises, and sweet and sugred words, draw unto them the choysest wits they find amongst us, they observe wherein each man is most likely to excell, and imploy him accordingly, some in writing, some in reading, some in preaching, some in disputing, they have some for Schoole divinitie, some for positive, some for the studie of the Fathers, and <B8v>courses of antiquitie. But with us all these things are neglected, and therefore they goe before us, not in the goodnes of the cause, but in the good and wise managing of an evill cause. For I dare undertake that if a choyce be made, and men may have those helps & encouragements that are fit for men so imployed, this nationall Church will yeeld men more then matchable with the greatest of the adverse faction, in all those courses of learning, wherein they seeme most to excell.

But to returne to the words of the Apostle, we must contend, not for things indifferent, not mistaking one another, but [3.3.2] for the maintenaunce of the fayth. As the name of hope, sometimes signifieth the things we hope for, (as when the Apostle saith, If we had hope onely in this life we were of all men the most miserable)<sup>36</sup> sometime the desire and expectation of the same thinges: so the name of faith sometimes signifieth the act or habite of beleieving, sometimes that

<sup>29</sup> In context, this means that the orthodox Christians have lacked the missionary zeal of the Pharisees or of the Jesuits. That is, they have failed to ‘contend for the maintenance of the faith’.

<sup>30</sup> Here, in context, ‘catholics’ does not mean Roman Catholics. The word referes to ‘the orthodox and right-believing Christians’ of the end of the preceding paragraph, i.e., those adhering to the Nicene Trinitarian formula.

<sup>31</sup> At these Councils in 359, of Rimini, held for the bishops of the West, and of Seleucia, held for the bishops of the East, emperor Constantius II tried to impose the ‘homoiōs’ formula of the fourth Council of Sirmium of 358, against Nicene orthodoxy.

<sup>32</sup> Athanasius of Alexandria (c.297-373), bishop of Alexandria, Athanasius the Great, the Confessor or the Apostolic; chief defender of orthodox Trinitarianism against Arianism.

<sup>33</sup> *Possibly*: Eusebius of Vercelli (c.283-371), Bishop of Vercelli in northern Italy; anti-Arian; persecuted and exiled under Constantius II; *or possibly*: Eusebius of Samosata (died c. 379), Bishop of Samosata; anti-Arian; martyr.

<sup>34</sup> Hilary of Poitiers (c.310 - c.367), Bishop of Poitiers. “Hammer of the Arians”, “Athanasius of the West.”

<sup>35</sup> Jerome, *Dialogue Against the Luciferians*, 19.

<sup>36</sup> 1 Corinthians 15:19.

sum of Christian doctrine, the conclusions whereof are not demonstrable by reason, but must <C1>be believed by faith. This doctrine of fayth (least we mistake it) is described by two circumstances. It was [3.3.2.1] once delivered, and it was delivered [3.3.2.2] to the Saints. It is said to have been [3.3.2.1] once delivered, to expresse the difference betweene the manner of the divine revelation formerly, and since Christ appeared. For before, the heavenly truth was revealed, not all at once, but in divers sorts, and degrees, according as the time wherein the revelation was made, was neerer, or more remote from the appearing of Christ, but in the last times God spake by his owne sonne,<sup>37</sup> and by him at once delivered all that, that shal be knowne concerning himselfe, till the ends of the world. So that we which are Christians must believe nothing but that which was delivered at the first beginning of Christianitie.

So that the error of the Montanists<sup>38</sup> is to be rejected, which imagined, that Christ revealed not all the mysteries of his kingdome to Peter, on whom he promised to build his Church, to John, the disciple he so deerely loved, which leaned on his breast at the mysticall supper, and to the <C1v>rest of that blessed company, but reserved many things till the spirit descended uppon Montanus, and his prophetesses: as also the phrensie of those heretickes in Fraunce, which affirmed, that as the Father was author of the old Testament, & the Sonne of the New, so the holy Ghost in the last times must be the author of a third, which is a law of love, which because it is the last, to continue for ever, & to have none after it, may (as they suppose) be rightly termed the eternall Gospell, so abusing the place of the revelations of Saint John.

But passing by these errors of phanaticall and vaine men: in that the faith is said to have beene **once delivered**, we observe two things; the fyrst, [3.3.2.1a] that that onelie is true which was **delivered at the first**. For howsoever many things be more fullie, distinctly, and expresly knowne in latter times then they were formerly, yet they were delivered at the first infolded in generalities, out of which they are afterwards more distinctly, and expresly deduced, even as a child, when it is first borne, hath all those parts of body, that <C2>ever after it hath, though not expressed and enlarged as afterwards they are, as Vincentius Lerinensis<sup>39</sup> most aptly noteth.

Secondly we may observe, [3.3.2.1b] that whatsoever may be proved to be **most auncient**, is undoubtedly true, as being immediatly inspired from the spirit of truth.<sup>40</sup> Quod primum, verissimum: the truth is before the counterfeite, the thing before the imitation of the thing, the habite before privation, and good before evill: the good seede was first sowed, and then the envious man came, et superseminavit zizania, and sowed tares, where the good seede was before.

We deny not therefore, but most willingly graunt unto our adversaries, that **Antiquitie** is a note of the true Church; not as if that Church were alwaies purest, and most uncorrupt, which first received the fayth, and hath longest continued in the profession of it: for then the Aethiopian and Asian Churches, would prove themselves as pure or purer, then any Churches in the world: but because

<sup>37</sup> A reference to Hebrews 1:2.

<sup>38</sup> Montanism, or 'the New Prophecy', was a prophetic movement arising in Phrygia in the late 2<sup>nd</sup> century church, named after its founder Montanus, emphasising new, ecstatic revelation by the Spirit, finally regarded as heretical by the orthodox church, on account of its claims for post-apostolic divine revelation.

<sup>39</sup> Vincent of Lérins, died c.445CE. He is known for his 'General Rule for distinguishing the Truth of the Catholic Faith from the Falsehood of Heretical Pravity', found in chapter 2, §6, of his *Commonitory*, 'we hold that faith which has been believed everywhere, always, by all'.

<sup>40</sup> Alluding to John 14:17, 16:13.



that is the truest and purest Church, which holdeth that doctrine, and discipline that was **first delivered**.

The Romanists are wont to stand much upon this note of Antiquitie, but how wil they prove, they have the faith which was first delivered. They prove it, because they once had it, and it cannot be shewed, when they departed from it. For aunswer whereunto we say, that in many things we can shew, when the alteration beganne. {Note: Georg: Cassa. in praefa. ordin: Roma:}<sup>41</sup> For who knoweth not, that Charles the Emperour with threatens, and punishments, forced all the Clergie in the Provinces subject unto him, to forsake the ancient formes of divine service, & publique administration, they had formerly used, and to receive the Romane order; and that the Spanyards (as beeing most stiffe in all theyr courses) held their owne rites, till in the time of Gregory the seaventh, they were forced by Alphonsus the sixt, to leave them, which they did not without great sorrow expressed with teares.

And though we could not preciselie note the time, when theyr errors & abuses entered into the Church, yet the consequent were not good, that therefore <C3>they have not departed from the first and originall puritie. For there are and have beene many errors in the Church, not onely so judged by us, but confessed to be so by them, the precise time of the beginning whereof is not knowne. The opinion of the necessitie of giving the Sacrament of the Lords body unto infants, {Note: August. de peccat: rem:}<sup>42</sup> and the practise of the same continued in the Latine Church, (as Maldonatus<sup>43</sup> confesseth) sixe hundred yeeres, and is retained in all the Orientall Churches to this day. This was an error, and yet neyther the time when it began, nor the author of it knowne. The opinion, that none shall see GOD, nor enter into heaven till the resurrection, was the error of many of the auncient, yet the author of it, & the time, when it beganne is unknowne. The opinion of two resurrections the one of the just, the other of the wicked, (there beeing betweene the one and the other above a thousand yeres) was an error amongst the auncient, the Author of it, and the time when it beganne, is not knowne.

To leave these things that were aunci<C3v>ent, and to come to the things now prevayling in the Church of Rome; it was the old custome, that the Sacrament of the Lords body and blood, was given to all that were present, at the time of the mysticall blessing, consecration, and operation: all the Catechumeni, poenitents, & not communicants missis, et exclusis, being sent away and excluded: whence the whole mysticall action is called Missa. This custome continued till the time of Gregory the first, in whose time the Deacon after the reading of the Gospell pronounced those solemne words, si quis non communicat, exeat [[if anyone communicateth not, let him depart]]. This doth Cassander prove at large in his preface before the booke called Ordo Romanus, shewing that many doubted, whether the wordes of the Canon of the Masse, which imply a communion of the people, may be used in private Masses. By degrees they fell from the publique, and solemne communion of the people, & the Clergie alone communicated with the priest. Afterwards, they also (though present) abstained, and communicated not. When these private Masses began, it is not <C4>knowne.

<sup>41</sup> Field is referring here to the preface to Cassander's *Ordo Romanus* (1558). George Cassander, 1513-66, was a pro-Reformation Flemish theologian in the Roman church, unsuccessfully seeking to promote peace between the Protestants and Romanists.

<sup>42</sup> Field's reference here is to Augustine's, *On Merits and Remission of Sin, and Infant Baptism*.

<sup>43</sup> Juan Maldonado, 1533-1583, Spanish Jesuit priest and theologian; anti-Protestant; taught in Spain, Rome and France. We do not know to which of Maldonado's works Field is here referring, but it may be *Disputationum [...] circa septem Ecclesiae Romanae Sacramenta* (Lyons, 1614; or Paris, 1677).

The custome was to give the sacrament in both kindes to the people (as Lindan<sup>44</sup> proveth) and it was thought necessary, as the booke called Ordo Romanus sheweth: And all the Churches of the east retaine this custome unto this day. When the halfe communion began it is not knowne. In the time, that Luther began, almost all beleaved and taught, that Mary was conceived without sinne, and thought it a matter of pietie to be of that judgement. {Note: In 3 sent: dist: 3. quaest: 2.} Bonaventura in his time professeth,<sup>45</sup> that he never saw the writings of any one, that was of that opinion nor never could meet with any one that so thought. Who was the first that broached this opinion & published it in writing unto the world, it is hard to finde.

Besides all Romish religion standeth of contradictory assertions, as that the Pope may erre, and that he cannot erre, that he may depose Princes, and that he may not, that one body may be in many places, and that it cannot be in many places, the one sort of them denying, <C4v>that the other affirmeth: yet is not the first author of any of these contradictory opinions knowne. Thus we see how weakly the Romanistes prove the antiquitie of their faith and religion, whereof they so insolently glory and boast. But let us leave them & returne to the words of the Apostle.

[3.3.2.2] The second circumstance, whereby the doctrine of faith, for which we must contend is noted and described, unto us least we should mistake it, is that as it was once delivered, so it was delivered to the Saints. So that if we desire to finde the undoubted truth of Heavenly doctrine we must seeke it, non in confusione paganorum, non in purgamentis haereticorum, non in languore schismaticorum, non in coecitate Judaeorum, not in the confusions of pagan Infidels, not among out cast and forsaken Heretiques, not in the conventicles of Schismatiques, not among the blinde & hard harted Jewes, but amongst those Disciples of Christ Jesus, which cannot be justly challenged either for innovation, or division. According to that in the Canticles, where Christ is in<C5>quired after. Show thou mee O thou whom my soule loveth, where thou feedest, and where thou lvest at noone. For why should I be, as shee that turneth aside to the flockes of thy companions? and immediately he sheweth how he may be found. If thou knowest not O thou the fairest among women, get thee forth by the steps of the flockes, and feed thy kids by the tentes of the shepherdes.<sup>46</sup> In which words we are directed to seeke our Saviour Christ in the troupes, and companions of Christian people and pastors, which are named Saints in this place by the Apostle, because they are called to sanctification, & have the happie meanes of it. In these companies we shalbe sure to finde our Saviour Christ and the doctrine of faith he left unto us, if we have an eye to them, uppon whom no note of innovation or division may justly be fastened. So that if those societies in which we live have corrupted their wayes, and left theyr first puritie, we must (as Vincentius Lerinensis directeth us) looke to other Churches, & cast our eyes up higher, to the times that were before us. For example, in the daies <C5v>of our Fathers, they had private Masses halfe communions, and sundry others abuses, the most of the guides of Gods people taught men to put trust in papall indulgences, and such like lying vanities. Who soever doubted and made question of any of these thinges, if they did but cast their eyes upon the Easterne Churches that then presently were, or the Churches in former times, they might easily find, that in them there was no such thing.

Thus then in the Church we have certaine direction to find out the truth, neyther are any other to hope to find it, but such as reverence her judgement, & seek it in her communion. Whereupon

<sup>44</sup> William Damasus Lindanus, 1525-88, bishop of Roermond and of Ghent, defender of Romanism. We do not know to which of his works Field here alludes; it is possibly *Missa Apostolica* (1589).

<sup>45</sup> Bonaventura, 1221-74, Italian medieval Franciscan and scholastic theologian, the 'Seraphic Doctor'. Field's reference here is to Bonaventura's *Commentary on the Sentences of Peter Lombard*, 3.3.2.

<sup>46</sup> Song of Songs 1:7,8.

Tertullian<sup>47</sup> pronounceth, that none but such as are so affected, are to be admitted to any question or dispute of the Scriptures, and matters of fayth: and bringeth in the Church speaking unto heretickes, and praescribing against them in this sort: quid agitis in meo, non mei? what do you meddling with my things, you that are none of mine? By what right doest thou Marcion<sup>48</sup> cut downe my wood? <C6>Who gave thee leave Valentinus,<sup>49</sup> to turne the course of my Fountaines? By what authoritie doest thou Apelles<sup>50</sup> remove my auncient bounds? It is my possession, what do you here the rest of you, sowing and feeding at your owne pleasures? It is my possession, I possessed it of old, I possessed it before you, I have the certaine originall of it from them, whose the thing was, I am the heyre of the Apostles, as they disposed by their last will & testament, as they committed it unto my trust, as they adured me, so I keepe it; you they know not, you they disclaimed and rejected, as strangers, as enemies.<sup>51</sup>

This true and Orthodoxe church, which is the onely mistresse of Heavenly truth, maketh use of them, that erre, to her owne good, and their bettering and correction, if they refuse not her instructions. Utitur Gentibus ad materiam operationis suae, haereticis ad probationem doctrinae suae, schismaticis ad documentum stabilitatis suae, Judaeis ad comparationem pulchritudinis suae; alios invitat, alios excludit, alios relinquit, alios antecedit: omnibus gratiae dei participandae dat potestatem, sive illi <C6v>informandi, sive reformandi, sive recolligendi, sive admittendi sunt. Infidels are the matter of her divine worke of conversion. Heretiques serve for the tryall, proving, and approving of her doctrine, Scismatiques to shew her constancy, the Jewes imperfection to shew her perfection and beauty; some she inviteth, some she excludeth, some she forsaketh, and some she goeth before in divine perfections; to all she offereth the participation of divine grace, whether they be to be informed, or reformed or reconciled, or to be admitted to a higher degree of knowledge, and a more perfect estate. Thus have we heard the exhortation of the Apostle, moving us to contend earnestly for the maintenaunce of the fayth,<sup>52</sup> and describing it to us, by the Antiquitie of it, and that company of men amongst whom it is to be sought: Let us beseech almighty God to enlighten our understandings, that we may know it, to frame our harts to the love of it, and to make us ever constant in the defence of it. Amen. <C7 - blank>

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<sup>47</sup> Tertullian (c.155-c.240), a Berber from Carthage, early Christian author, polemicist and apologist, writing in Latin, coining the term 'Trinity'; later a Montanist, not considered entirely orthodox in his trinitarian understanding.

<sup>48</sup> Marcion of Sinope, c.85 - c.160, early-church heretic who denied the OT God was the NT God.

<sup>49</sup> The 2<sup>nd</sup> century gnostic, Valentinus of Alexandria, then Rome (c.100-c.160).

<sup>50</sup> The 2<sup>nd</sup> century gnostic, Apelles of Rome, then Alexandria, then Rome.

<sup>51</sup> The text 'what do you meddling [. . .] as strangers, as enemies' is Field's translation of part of ch. 37 of Tertullian's *The Prescription Against Heretics*; a nineteenth century translation is in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, ed. by A. Roberts, J. Donaldson and A. Cleveland Coxe, 10 vols (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), III, 261.

<sup>52</sup> Recalling again Jude 3, the subject of the sermon.

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